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VERSES

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No. 1

VERSES

BY

EMMA PUTNAM BANCROFT

DECORATED BY

CLARE BANCROFT MAYER

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1921

To those who read and do not hesitate
To merit find within, this book I dedicate:
To Clare and Billy, who, with fingers kind,
The wrappings of their "Mummie" would un-
wind—
To many who in fondness "Mummie" me,
Whose criticism kind of course would be—
To these I do not fear my thoughts to state,
Nor to them dread the book to dedicate.
(I hope that others, who may read this verse,
Will kindly say, "Oh well, it might be worse.")

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An old-fashioned garden had
Grandmother Brown,
Famed for its beauty in each
neighboring town—
From June 'till November such
flowers as grew
In this garden! Wait, let me tell
it to you.

C·B·M

In summer, the fairies came from the world over,
And settled right there — 'twas sweeter than clover.
The Fairy Queen lived in the heart of a rose—
The sweet-scented flowers provided her clothes.

C·B·M

I know—for I looked, and I listened,
you see
And followed the trail of a great
Bumble Bee,
One bright summer morning, sun-
shiny and mild,
On wings of adventure, when I was
a child.

C·B·M·

I heard such queer noises, I just
knew it meant
The fairies were planning some
lovely event—
I turned to Sweet-William and said
to him, "Please
Can you tell what does so excite the
Sweet Peas?"

C·B·M·

"Oh hush," he said gently, and, "whisper, my dear,
You know you're right close to the Elephant's Ear.
Be patient—now do, and 'till Four-o'clock stay
For Jack-in-the-Pulpit is wedded today

C·B·M·

So the Daisy told me, to our Fairy Queen,
The wedding takes place where the moss is most green."
I waited—and waited—and tired I grew,
The Pansies looked thoughtful, the Violets, too.

C·B·M·

With a start, the Sunflower turned
to the West—
The Blue-bells were ringing
with terrible zest—
I saw Johnny-jump-up for the
Bridal-wreath—
The Snap-dragon, the Spanish-
dagger unsheath.

C·B·M

The Trumpet - honeysuckle blew
forth such a blast
It roused from her sleep, Morning-
glory, who passed
The vain Black-eyed Susan, whose
Tulips so red
Were parted and smiling—and,
'tis true (so they said)

C·B·M·

Her white Lady-slippers were dropped in the way
Of wild Dandelion, untamed to this day.
The Milkweed was frozen—the Buttercups, full—
The Monkshood aschew, so I gave it a pull.

C·B·M·

The old Dutchman's-breeches had
been freshly pressed
And bright colored Lilies most
fragrantly dressed.
Geraniums and Asters, attended in
Phlox;
At once, all eyes turned to the gay
Four-o'clocks.

C·E·M·

A flutter, and then through the
Sweet-briar lane,
Came bride, sweet and dainty—
and bridegroom, so plain—
The Touch - me - not shivered
right there at my side,
Forget-me-nots hurried to peep
at the bride.

C·B·M

The Fox-glove, excited, worked with such great zeal
In less than a minute, broke Solomon's seal—
The sad Ragged-sailor, whose life was complete
Brought his poor Bleeding-heart, and placed at her feet.

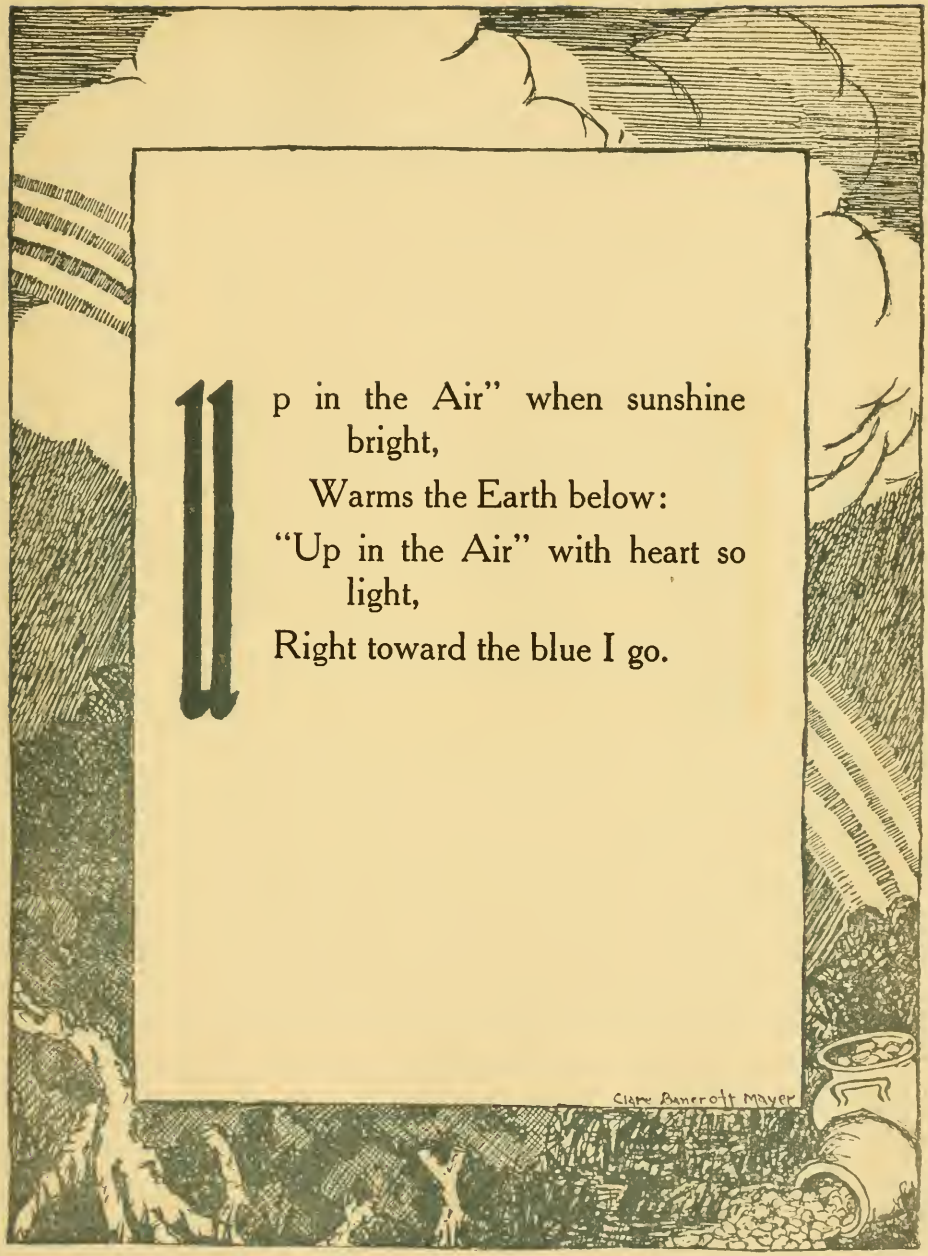
C·B·M

The Holly-hock sadly, just nodded her head,
The Blood-root stained Snow-on-the-mountain deep red—
The Poppies grew sleepy, Carnations turned Pink—
The Lilacs grew sweeter—now what do you think?

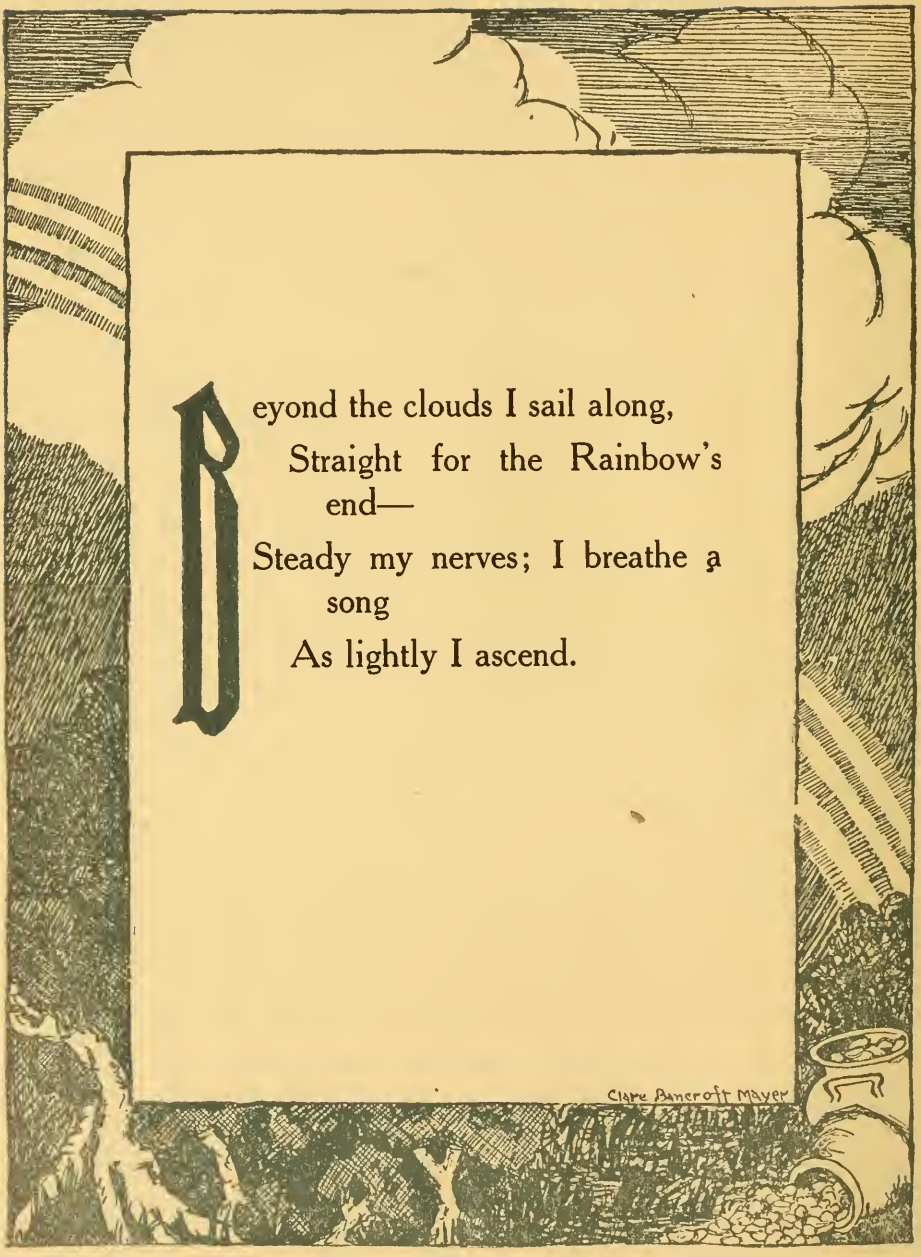
C·B·M·

'Twas the grandest affair you ever did see
The Century-plant said it (it's older than me!)
'Tis true—it all happened right there in my town,
In the old-fashioned garden of Grandmother Brown.

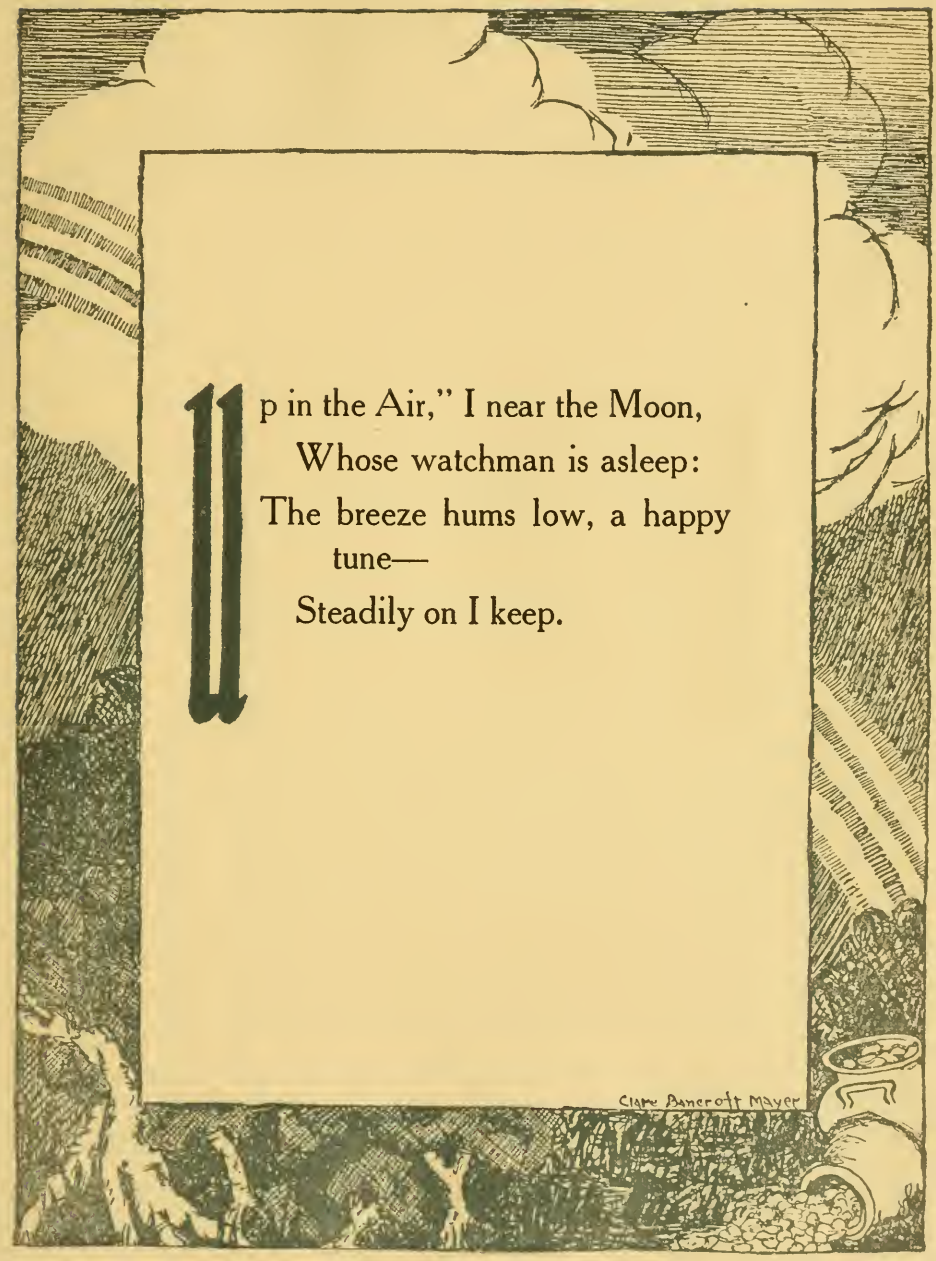
C·B·M



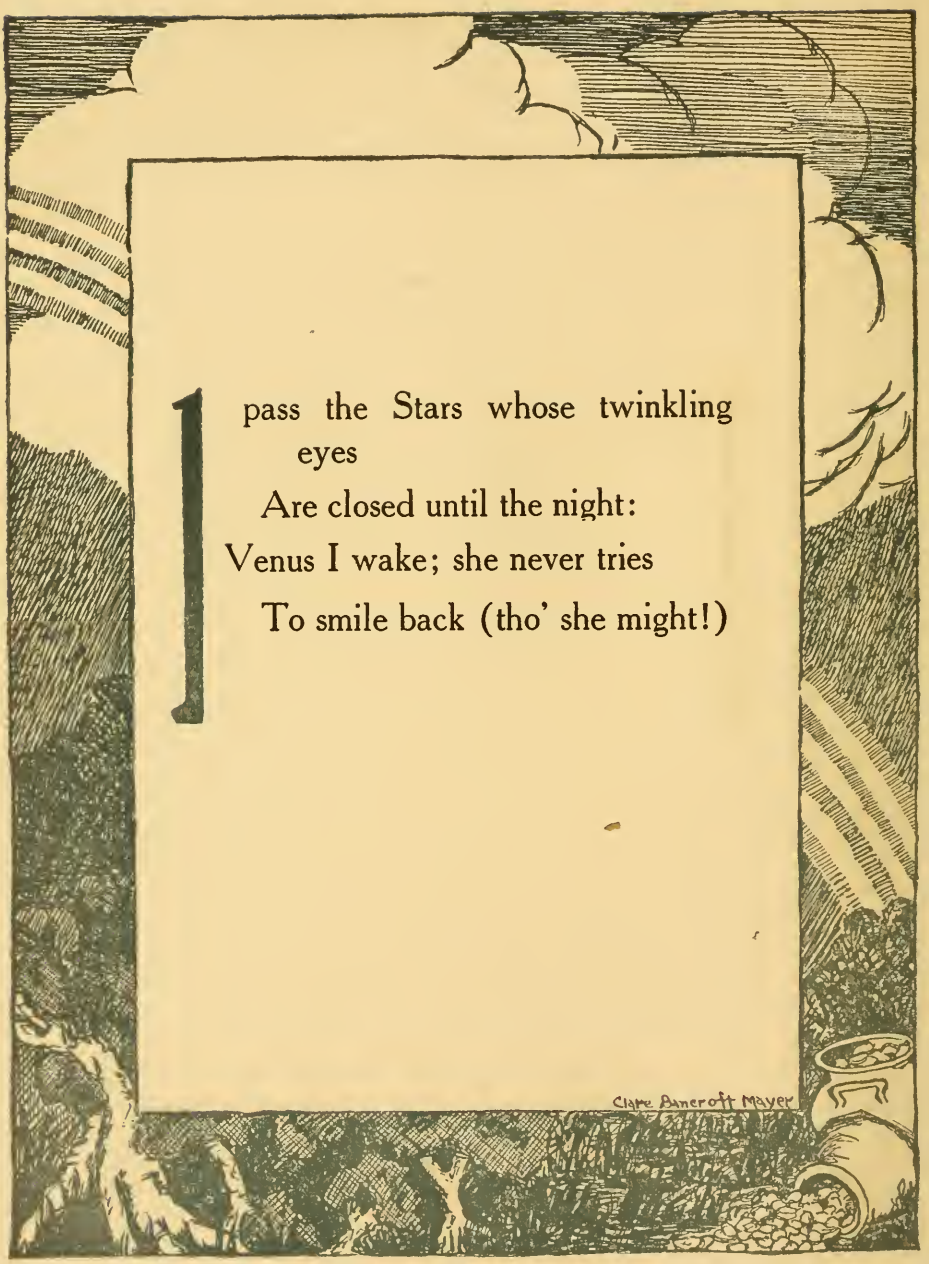
Up in the Air" when sunshine bright,
Warms the Earth below:
"Up in the Air" with heart so light,
Right toward the blue I go.



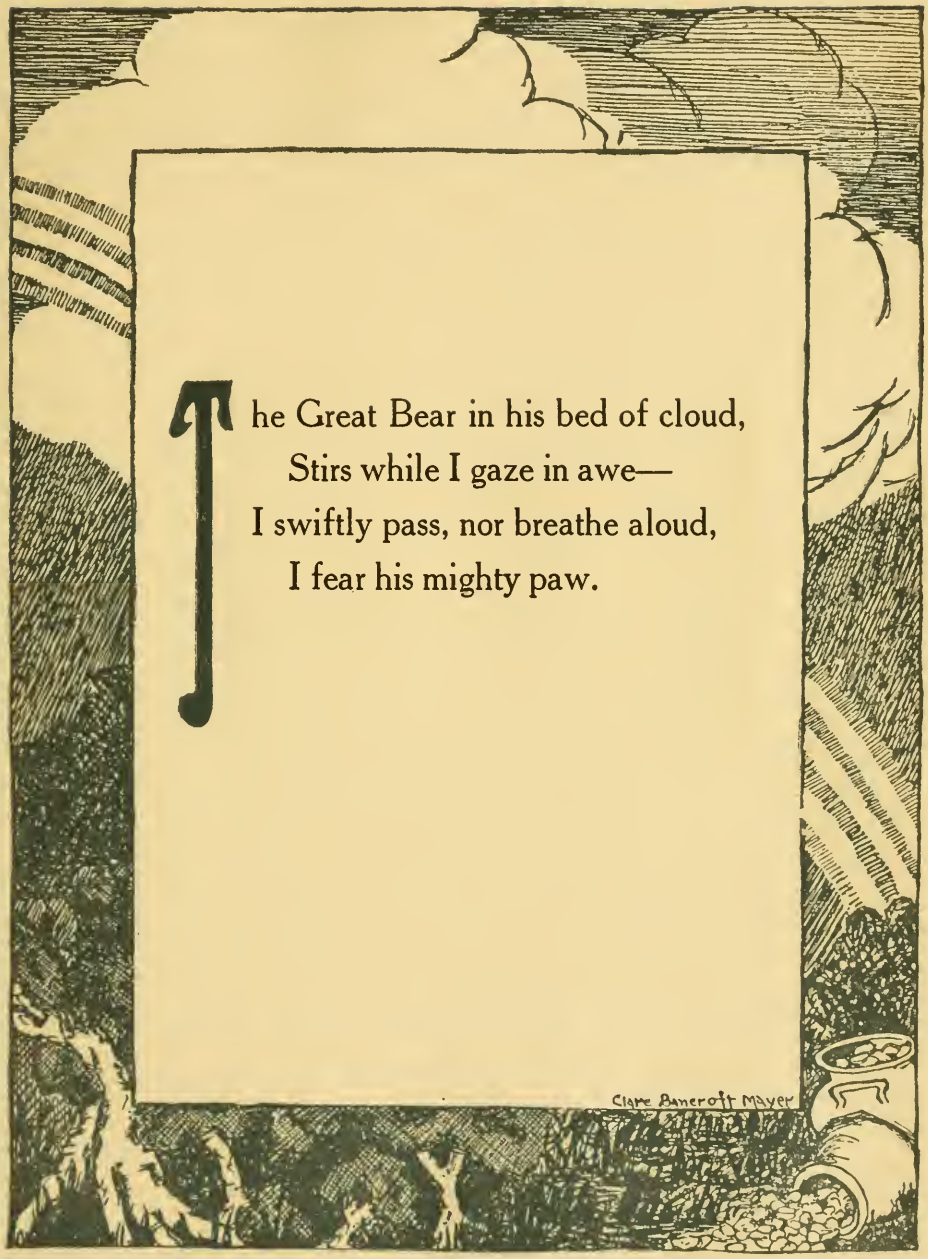
Beyond the clouds I sail along,
Straight for the Rainbow's end—
Steady my nerves; I breathe a song
As lightly I ascend.



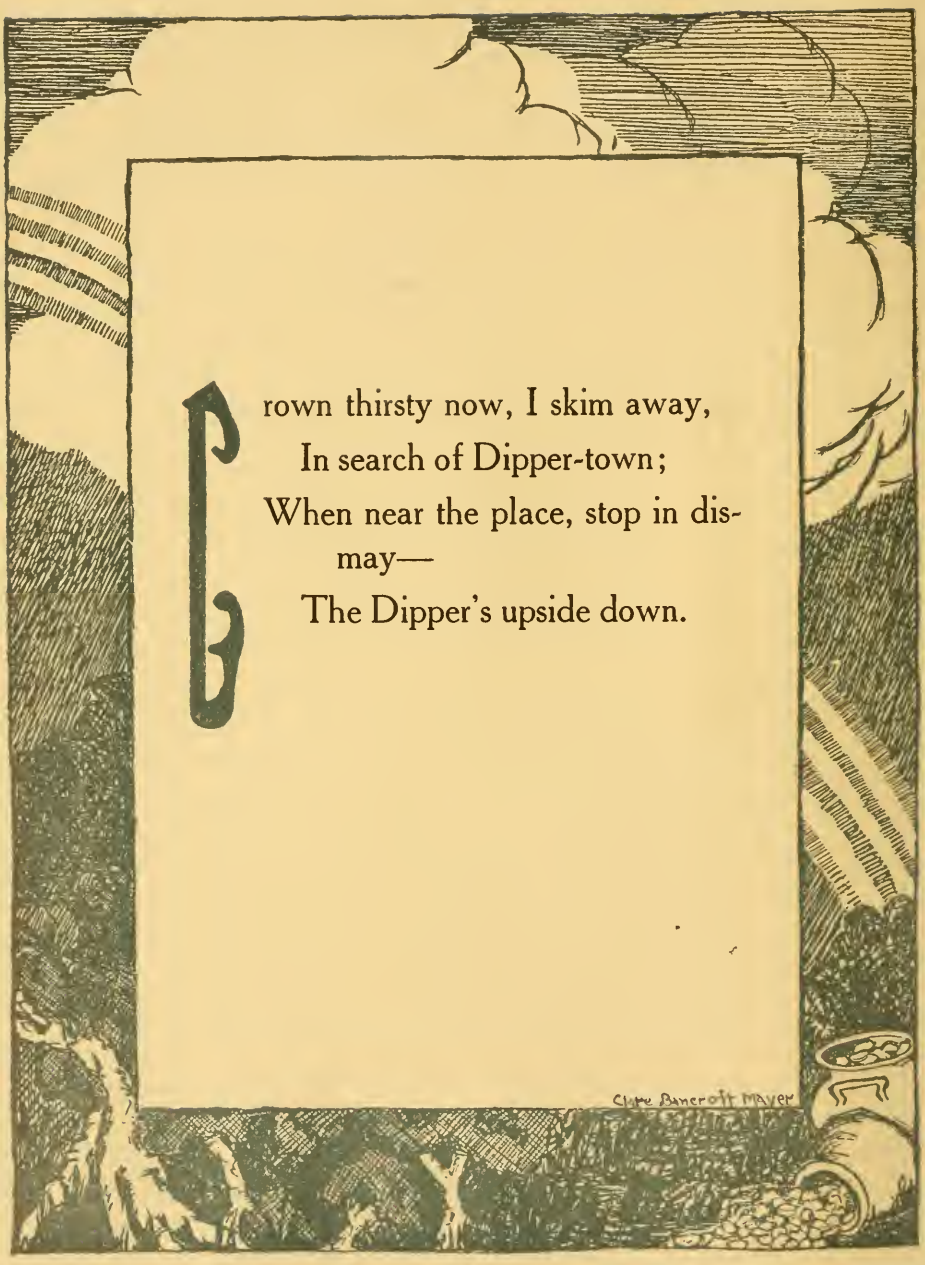
Up in the Air," I near the Moon,
Whose watchman is asleep:
The breeze hums low, a happy tune—
Steadily on I keep.



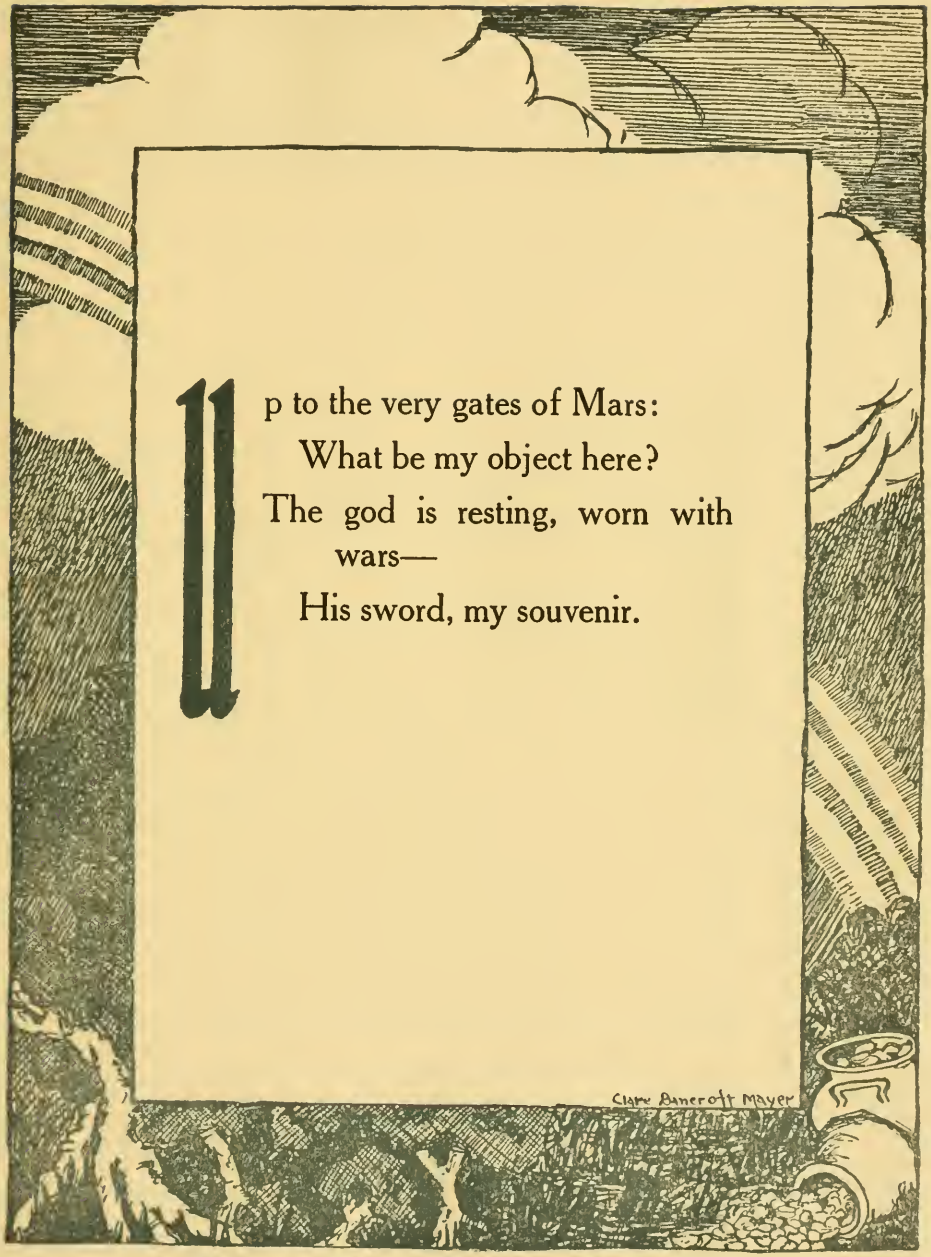
I pass the Stars whose twinkling eyes
Are closed until the night:
Venus I wake; she never tries
To smile back (tho' she might!)



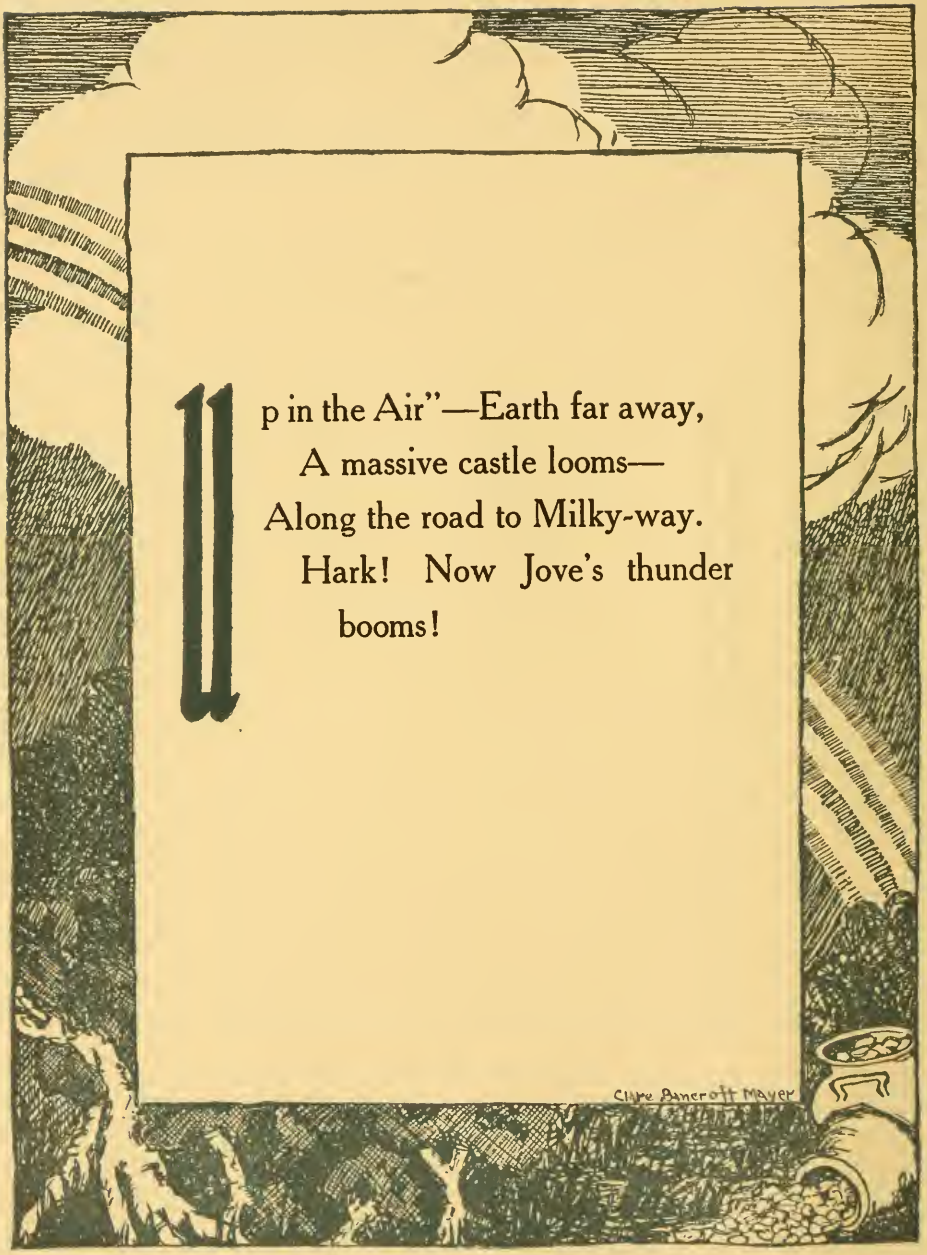
The Great Bear in his bed of cloud,
Stirs while I gaze in awe—
I swiftly pass, nor breathe aloud,
I fear his mighty paw.

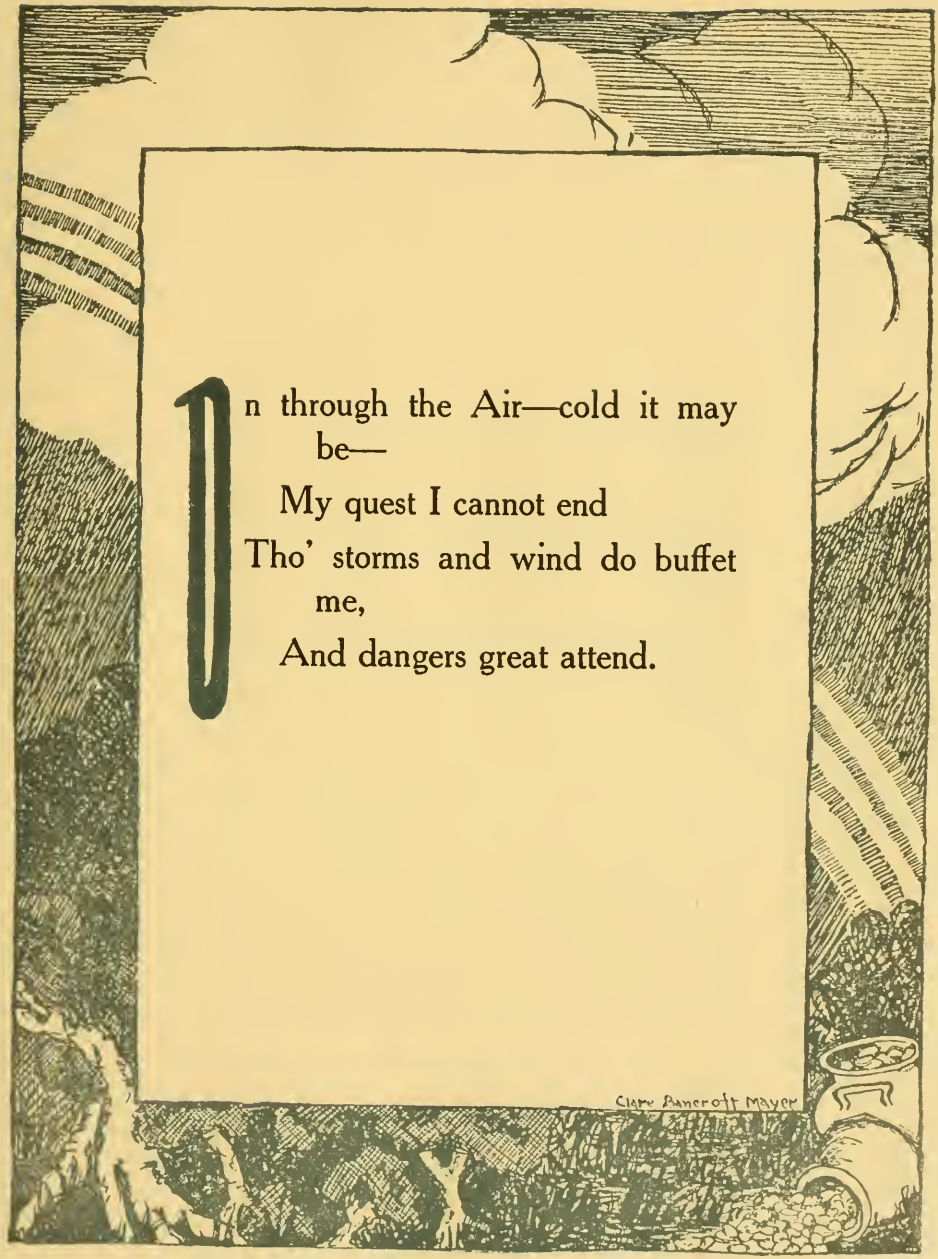


Crown thirsty now, I skim away,
In search of Dipper-town;
When near the place, stop in dismay—
The Dipper's upside down.

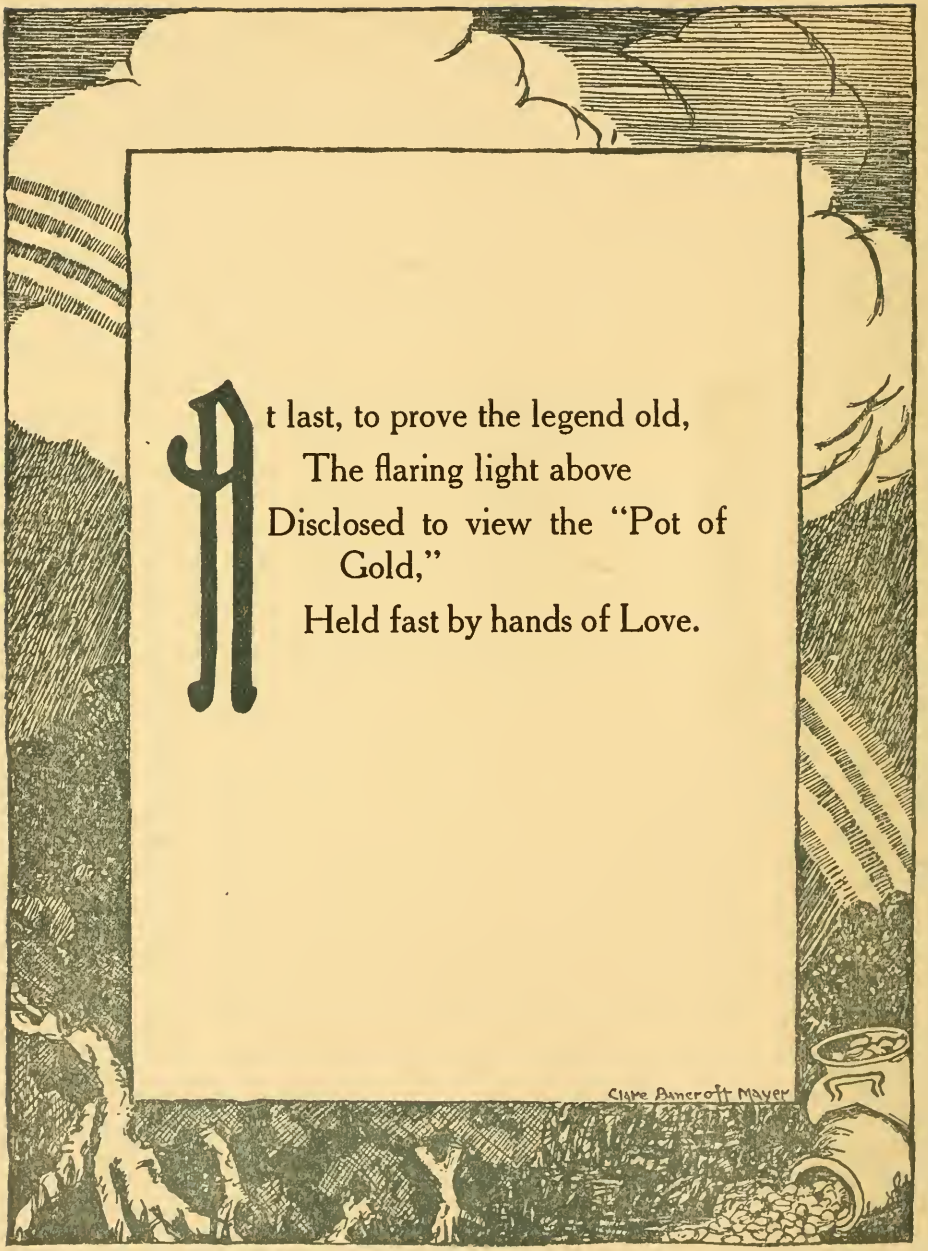


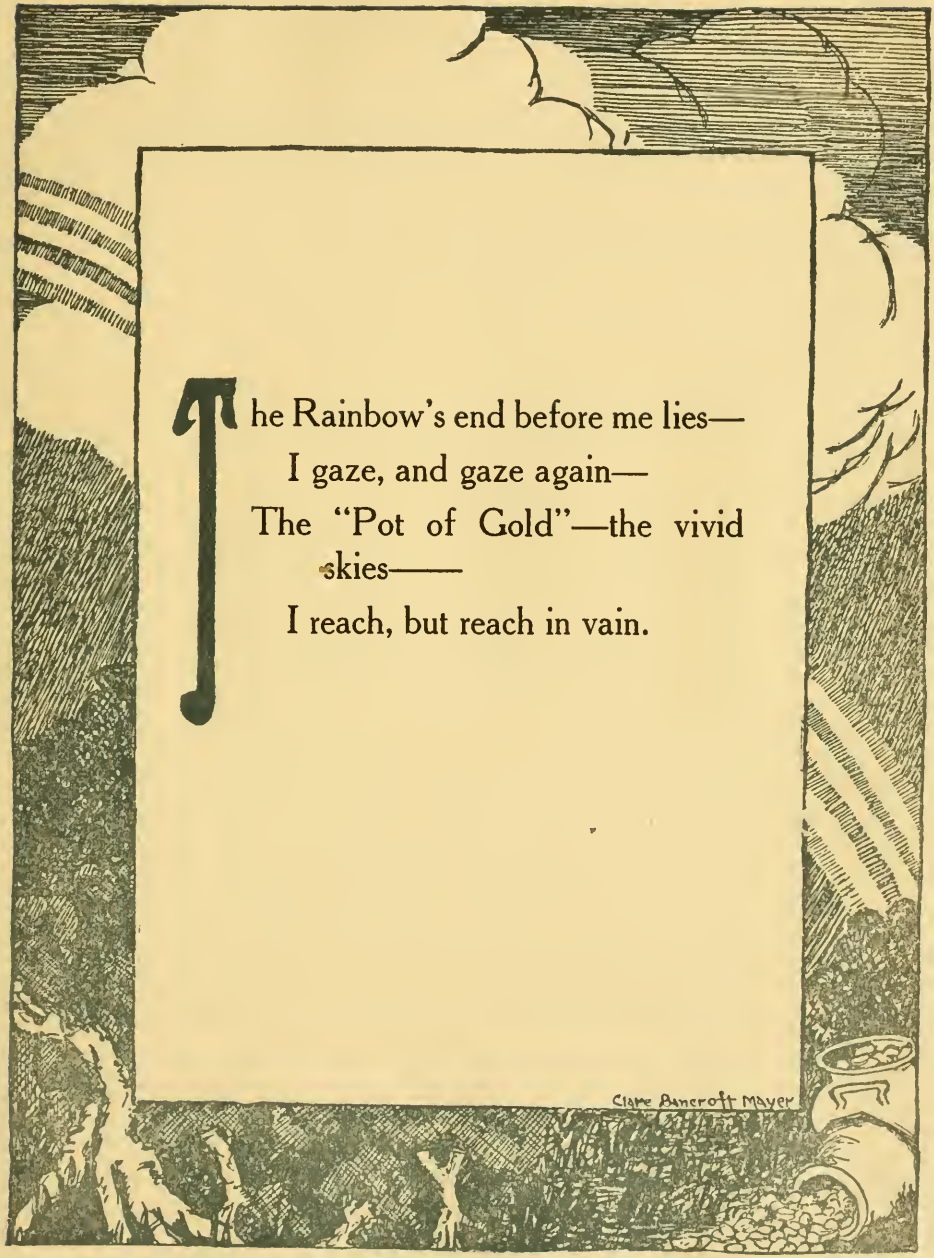
Up to the very gates of Mars:
What be my object here?
The god is resting, worn with wars—
His sword, my souvenir.


Up in the Air"—Earth far away,
A massive castle looms—
Along the road to Milky-way.
Hark! Now Jove's thunder
booms!
Clare Bancroft Mayer

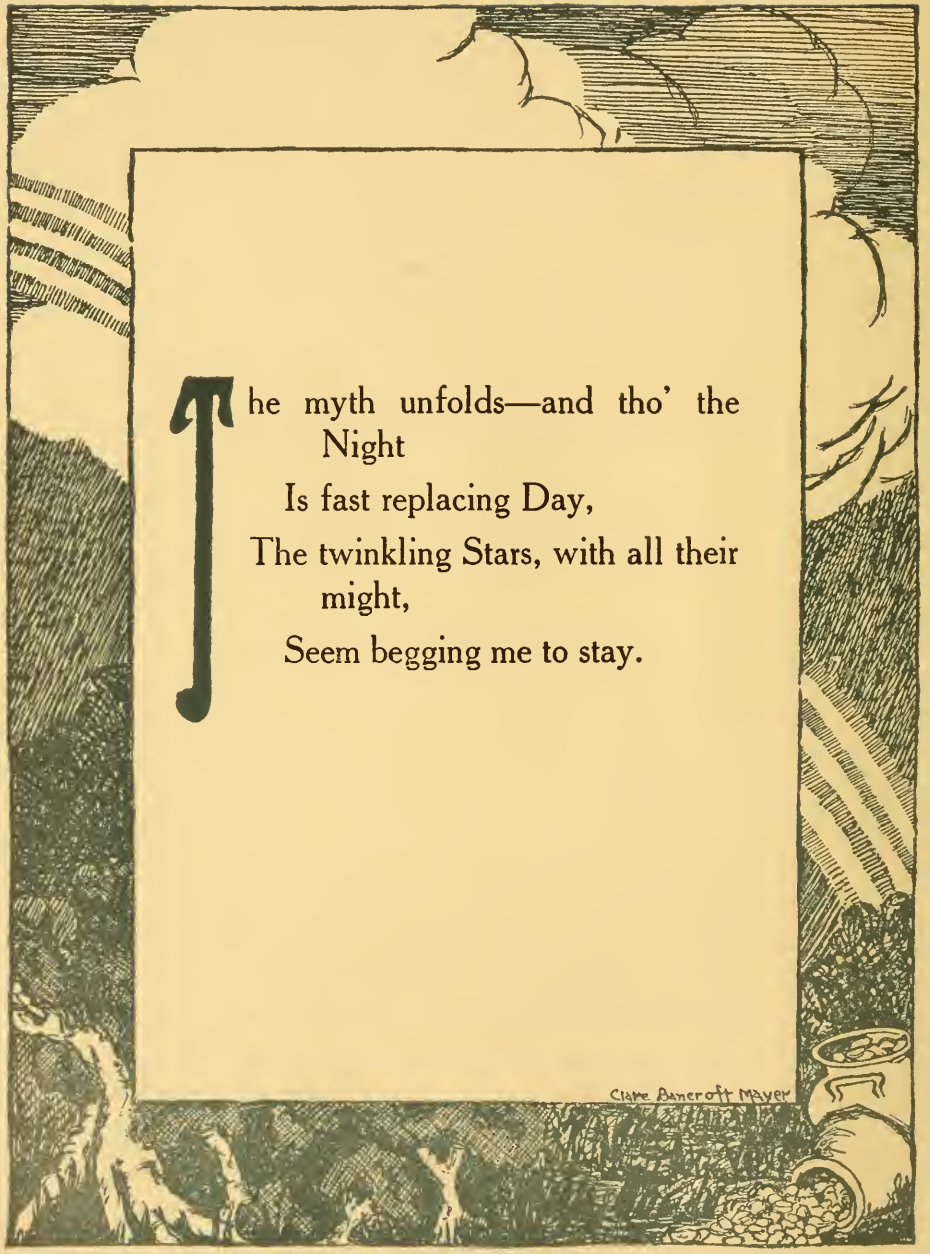


In through the Air—cold it may be—
My quest I cannot end
Tho' storms and wind do buffet me,
And dangers great attend.

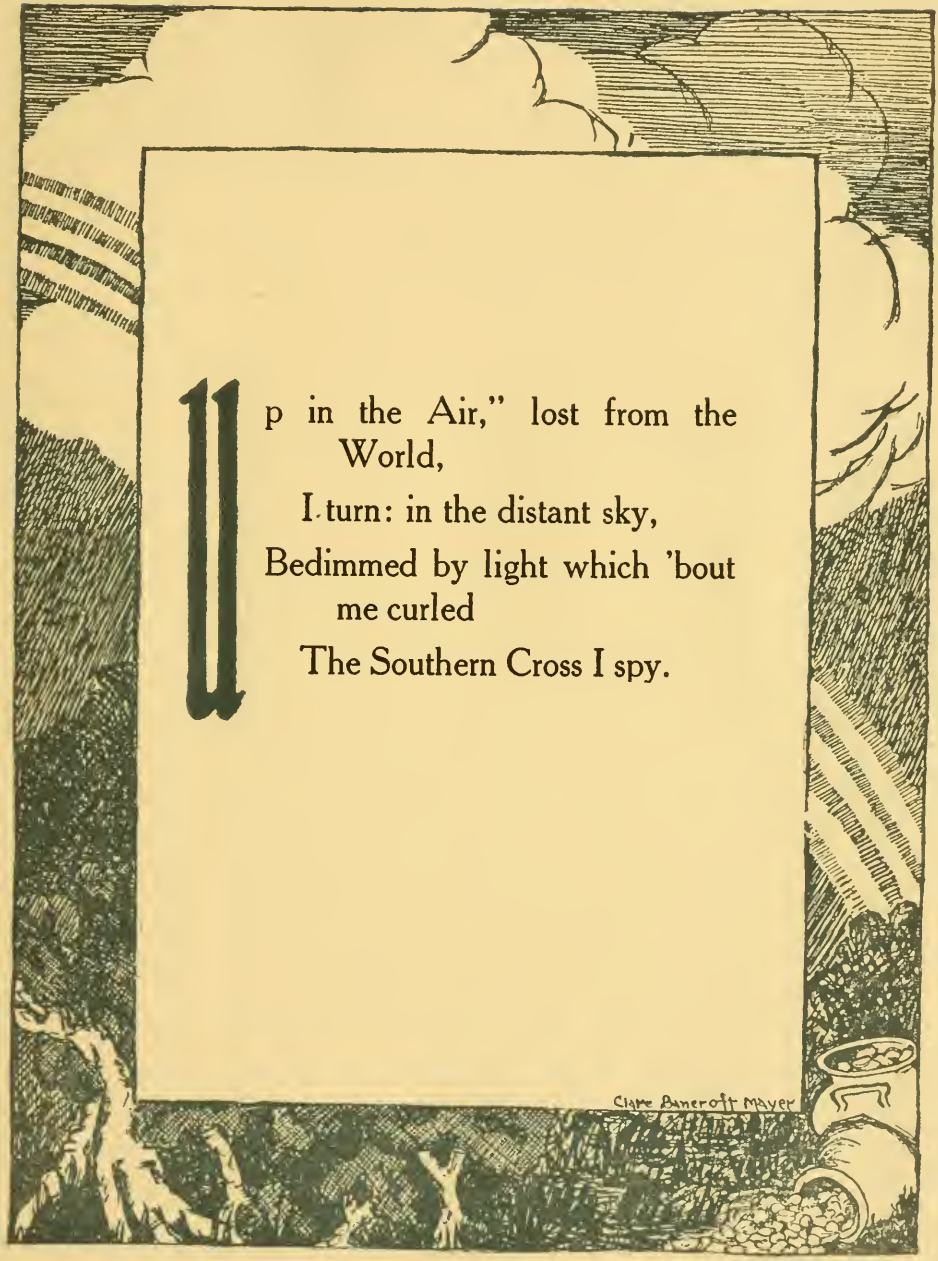

At last, to prove the legend old,
The flaring light above
Disclosed to view the "Pot of Gold,"
Held fast by hands of Love.
Clare Bancroft Mayer



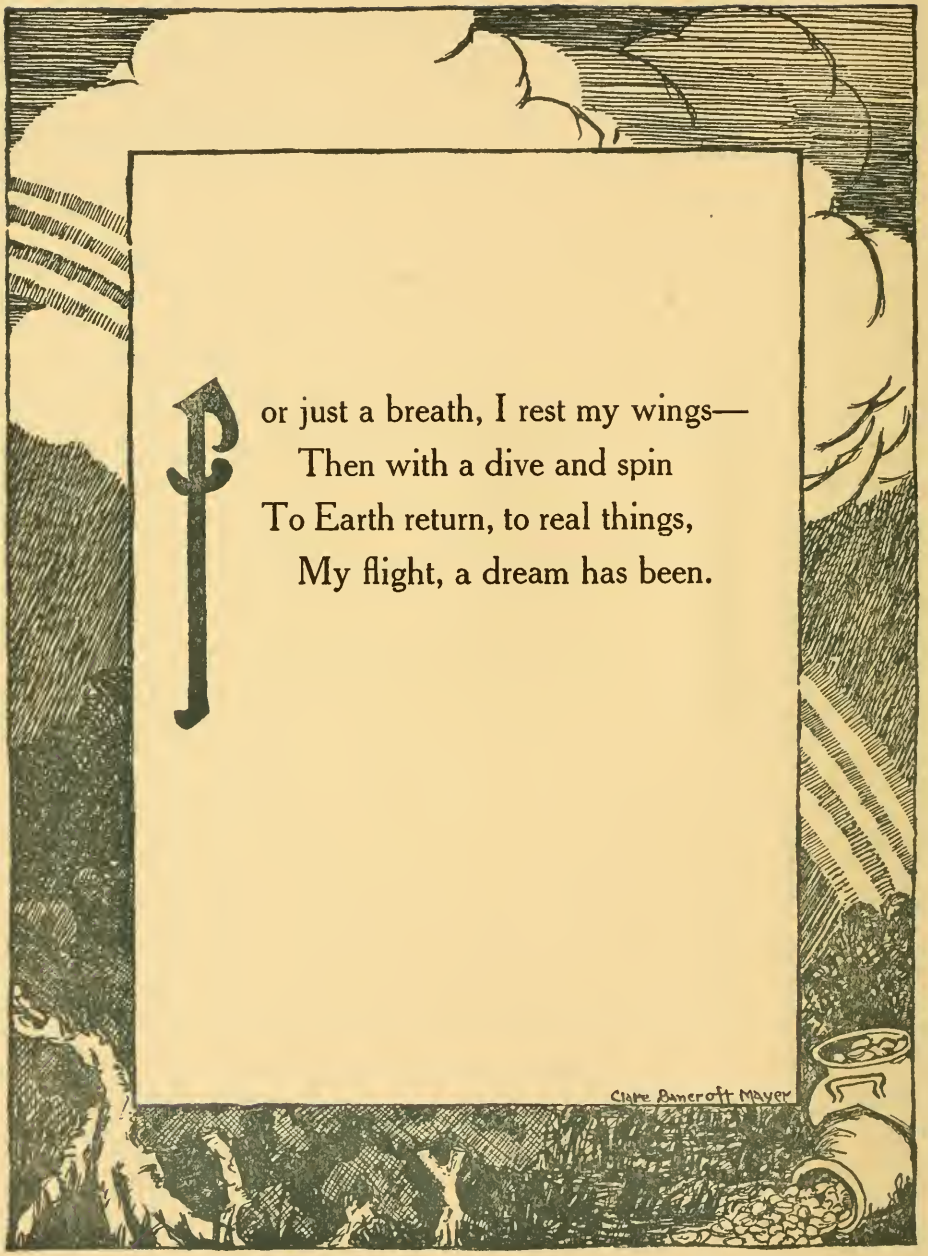
The Rainbow's end before me lies—
I gaze, and gaze again—
The "Pot of Gold"—the vivid skies——
I reach, but reach in vain.



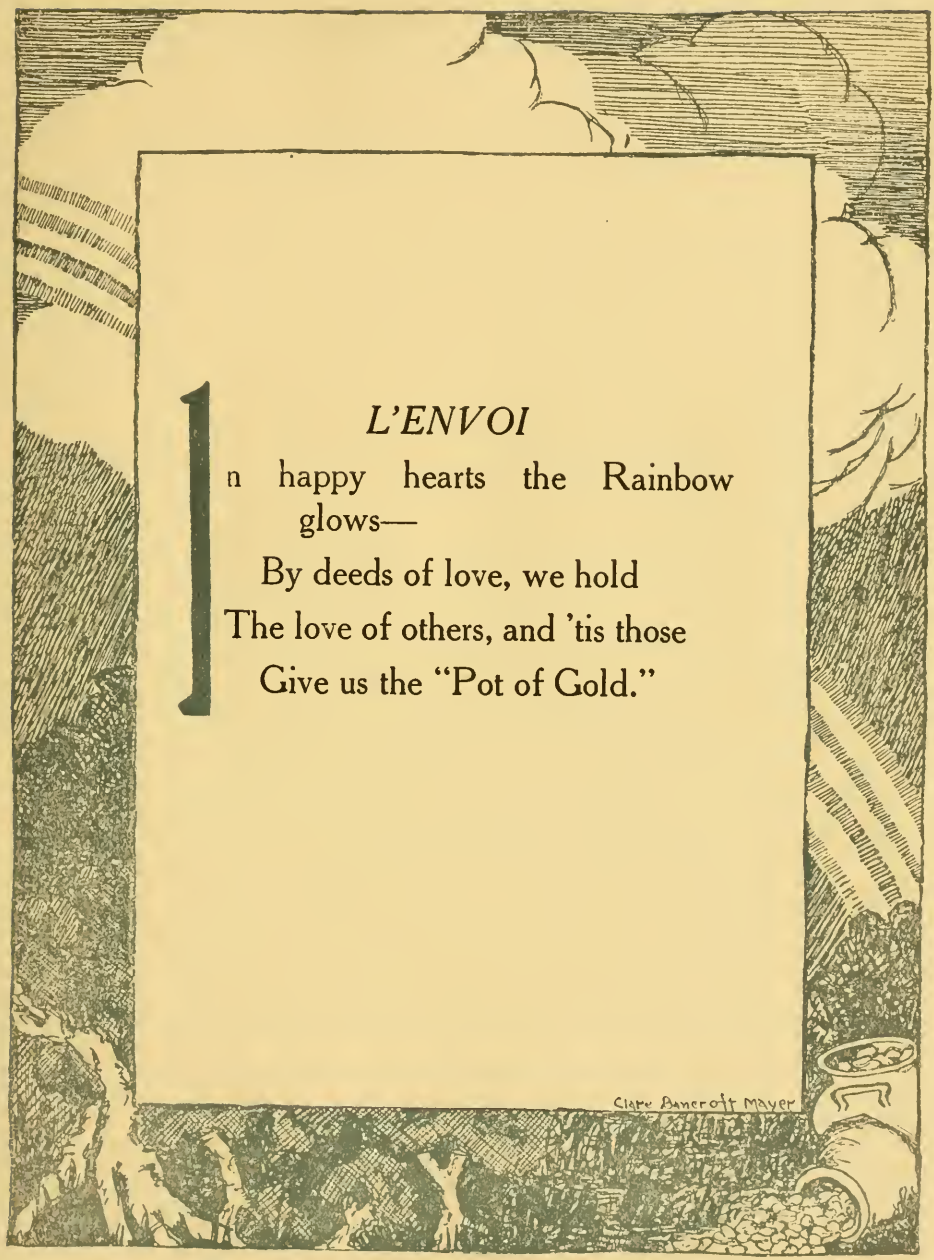
The myth unfolds—and tho' the Night
Is fast replacing Day,
The twinkling Stars, with all their might,
Seem begging me to stay.



Up in the Air," lost from the World,
I turn: in the distant sky,
Bedimmed by light which 'bout me curled
The Southern Cross I spy.



For just a breath, I rest my wings—
Then with a dive and spin
To Earth return, to real things,
My flight, a dream has been.

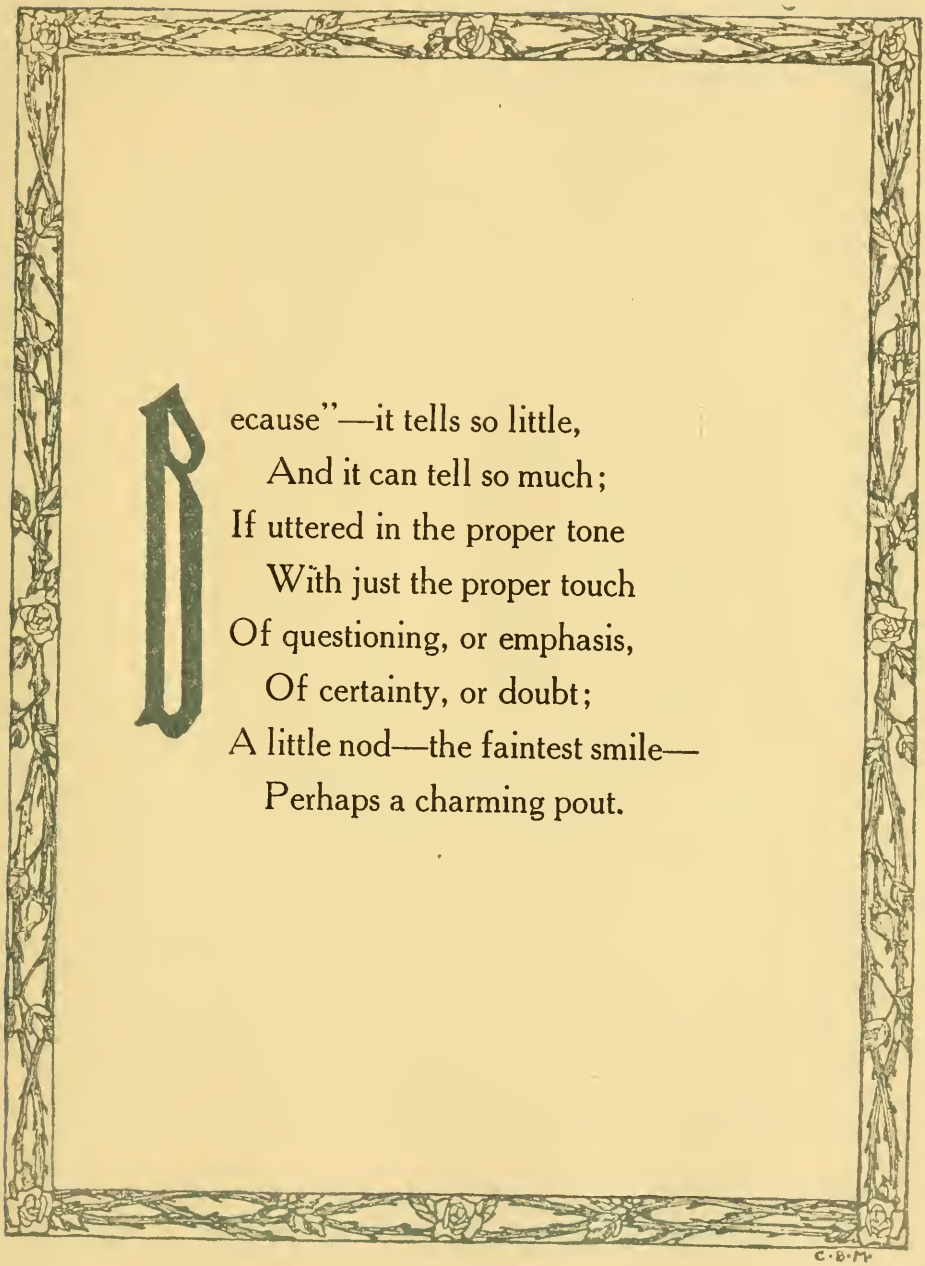


L'ENVOI

In happy hearts the Rainbow glows—
By deeds of love, we hold
The love of others, and 'tis those
Give us the "Pot of Gold."

If you ask me why I smile today,
I'll answer, "Just Because,"
Should you, tomorrow, witness tears,
That, too, would be, "Because."
"Because" (a woman's reason)
Since Father Adam's day,
Has kept man puzzled—wondering—
It's just a woman's way.

C.B.M.



Because"—it tells so little,
And it can tell so much;
If uttered in the proper tone
With just the proper touch
Of questioning, or emphasis,
Of certainty, or doubt;
A little nod—the faintest smile—
Perhaps a charming pout.

I assure you, Eve showed wisdom,
Tho' Adam made the laws,
In leaving helpless daughters
That forceful word "Because."
Could you ask her spirit "Why?"
She'd surely have to pause,
(She wouldn't know—she couldn't tell)
She'd whisper, "Just Because."

C·B·M·

Aw gee! I wish that I could be a scout,
I know a lot o' things they talk about.
I know a dandy place a guy c'n camp,
An' scouts don't care a bit if it is damp.
I know jus' where to catch the biggest fish,
An' there's a bird's nest—Oh gee! How I wish
I didn't have to wait another year.
Twelve months! The days are all so long; look here,
I c'n run fast, an' jump, an' whistle, too.
Listen; can't I whistle loud as you?

Clara Bancroft Mayer

I hate this ol' blue suit I have to wear:
I need a new one; there's an awful tear
In this; tho' mother says it does not show,
(But sometimes even mothers do not know
How much a kid as big as me hates patches.)
Say, I c'n build a fire without matches!
Don't believe it? Some day you come with me
An' I bet I c'n prove it to you; see?
I got muscle, too; if you want to, try:
C'n box like anything, an' I don't cry.

Clare Bancroft Moyer

Wigwag? What's that? You learn
to talk with flags?
Now don't you 'spose I know my
dog's wigwags?
Swim? Want to race me to that
clump o' trees?
I'll show you how to swim!
Afraid you'll freeze?
An' c'n I set a trap or blaze a
trail?
Well, I c'n try again if first I fail.
(Aw gee! This suit—of course
I would not mind
Wearin' it, if I had the other kind
Like scouts wear.) Gosh, jus'
wait, you'll all find out
You bet, another year, I'll be a
scout!

Clara Bancroft Mayer

Hearing a tap at my window,
One cold and dreary day,
In haste I threw back the lattice
And there Love, wounded,
lay.

C·B·M·

Alone was I, and so lonely
I gathered Love into my arms;
Hoping to hold Love—and keep Love—
To brighten my days—with its charms.

C·B·M·

Love roused and smiled at me
sweetly—
With joy my heart beat fast.
I healed Love—and served Love
—gladly—
And thus the days went past.

C·B·M

I sang, and dreamed of valleys
Where Love and I would roam—
Of mountains, and great wide spaces
Where all the big Earth was home.

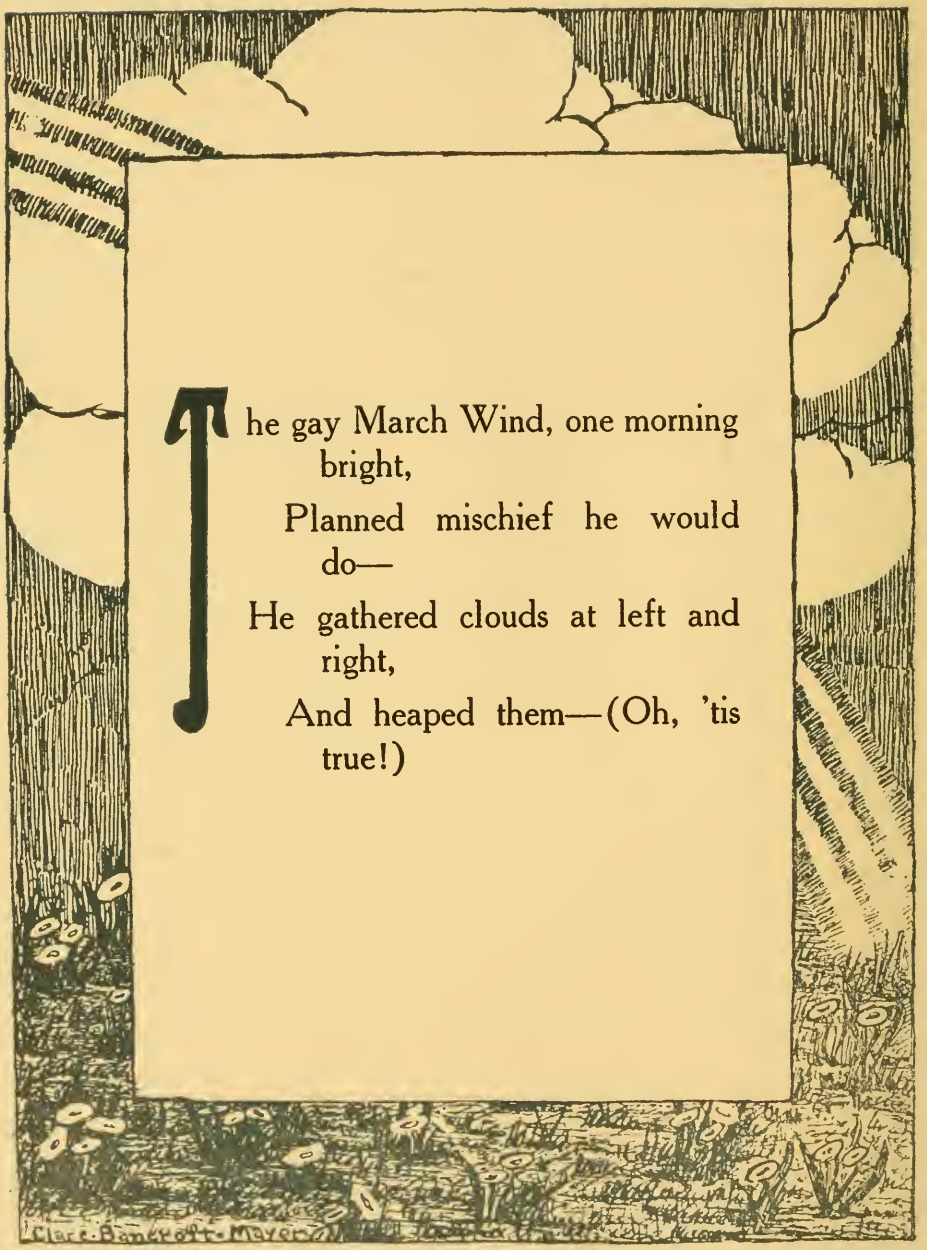
C·B·M·

Spring came—I opened my lattice—
Spring called—what could one do?
Love answered—then smiled at me sadly
As out of the window—Love flew.

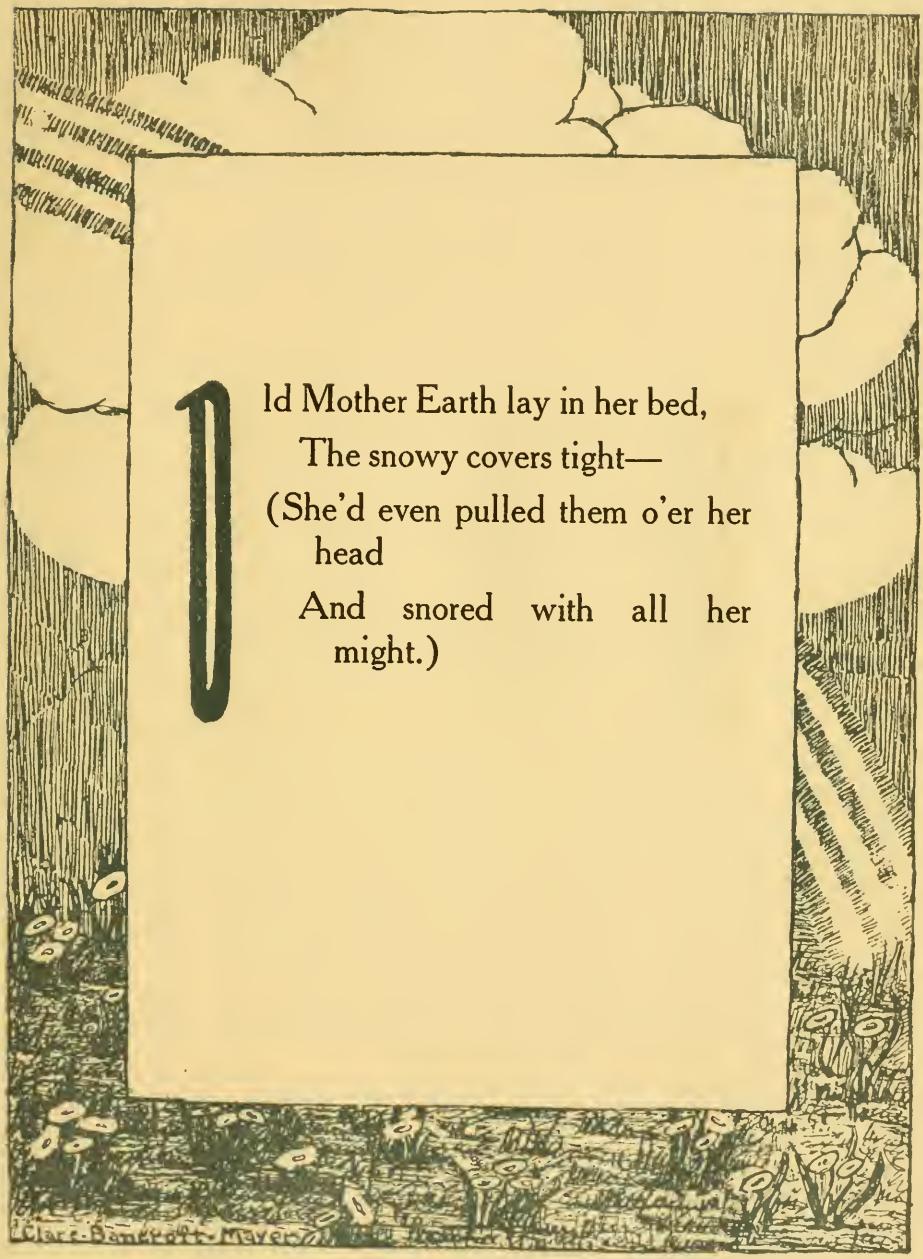
C·B·M

Ah, Love—so dear but so fickle—
Fly farther and farther away;
I'll wait—I know that I'll find you
Again at my lattice—some day.

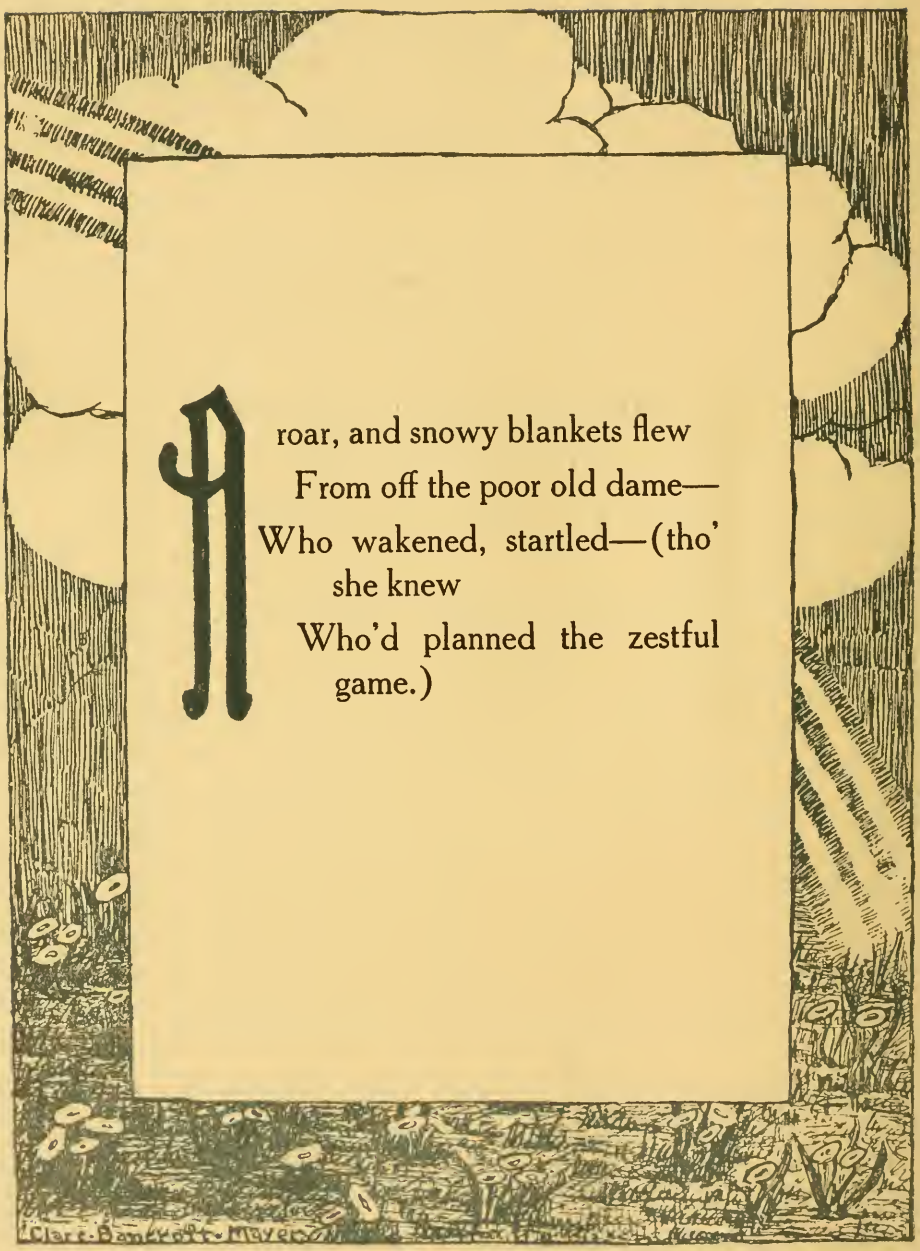
C·B·M



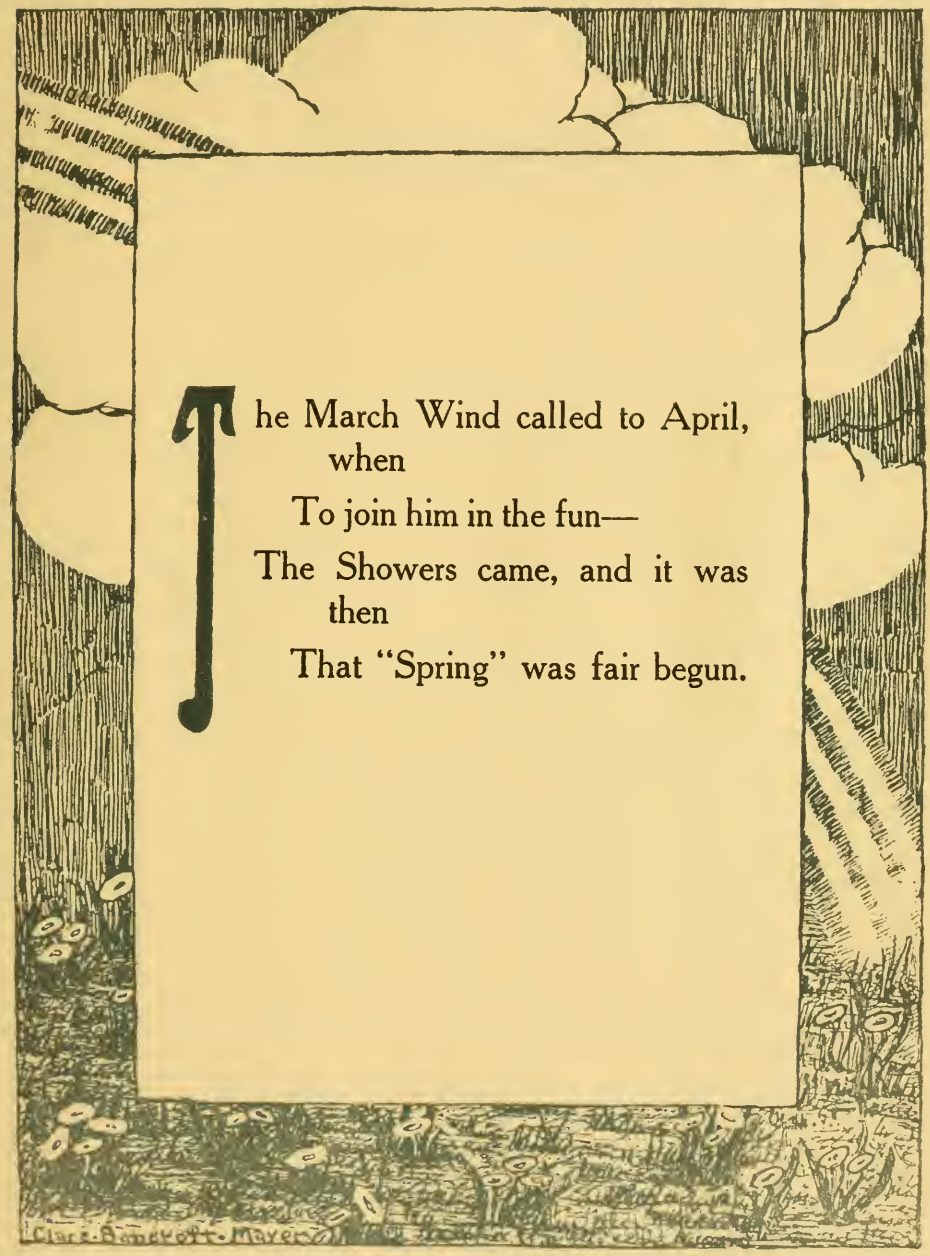
The gay March Wind, one morning bright,
Planned mischief he would do—
He gathered clouds at left and right,
And heaped them—(Oh, 'tis true!)



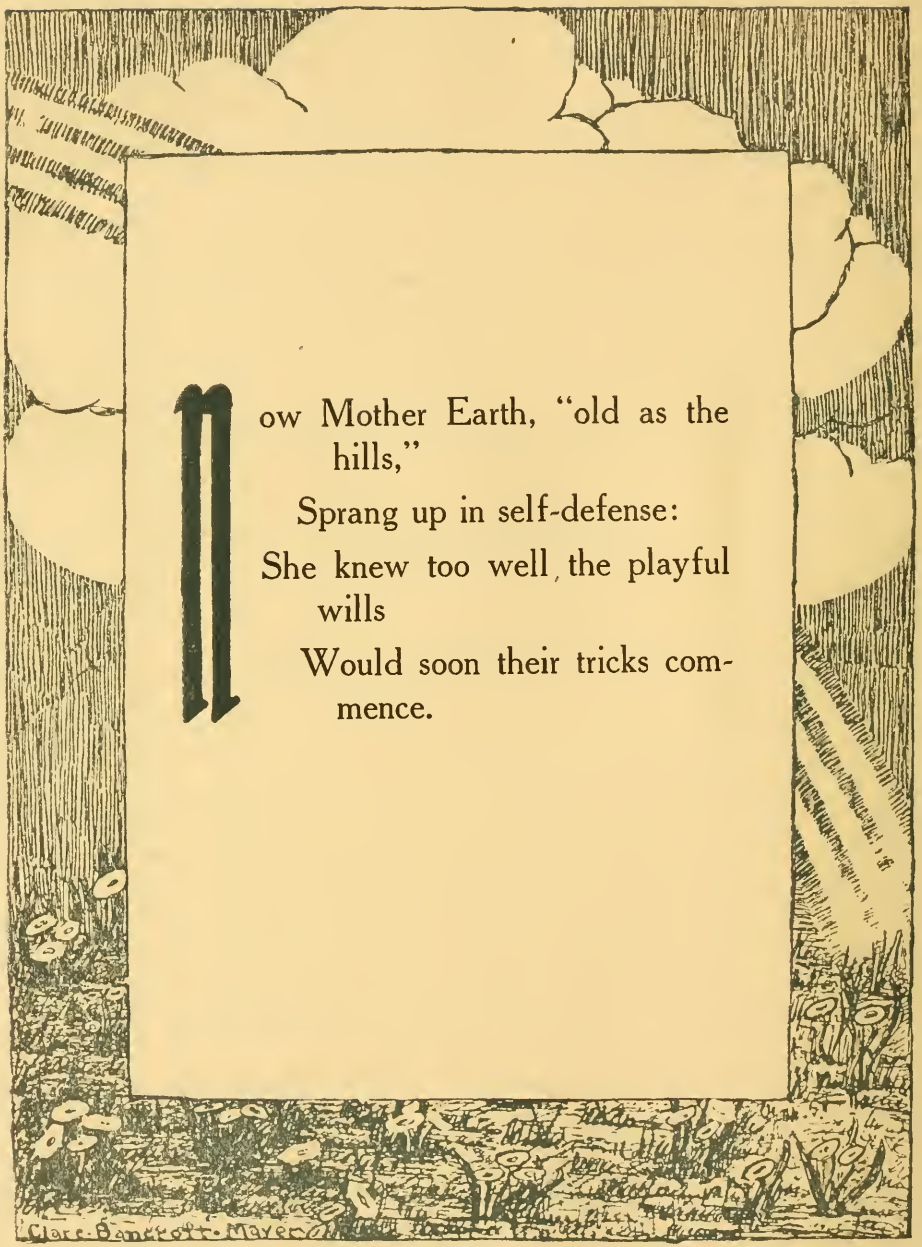
Old Mother Earth lay in her bed,
The snowy covers tight—
(She'd even pulled them o'er her head
And snored with all her might.)



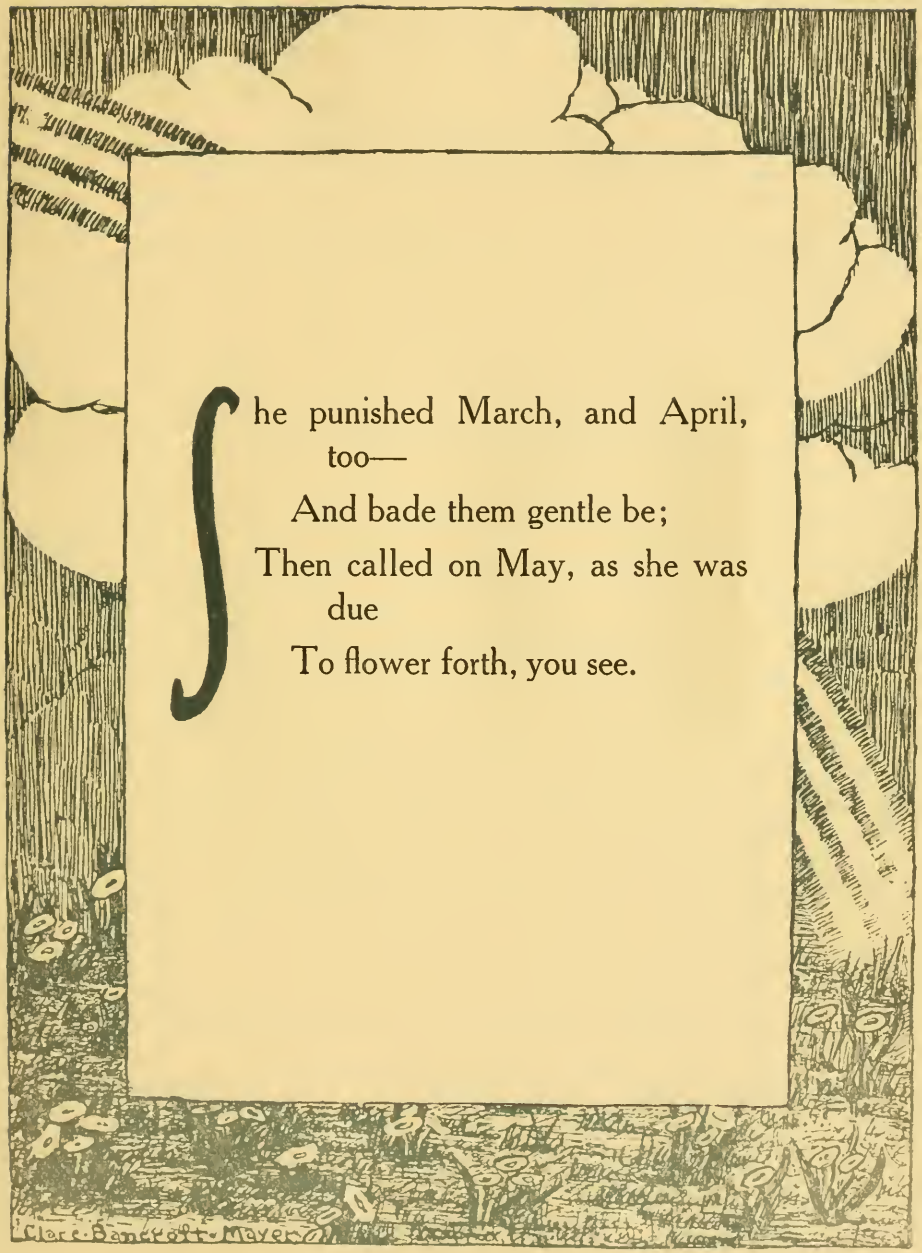
A roar, and snowy blankets flew
From off the poor old dame—
Who wakened, startled—(tho' she knew
Who'd planned the zestful game.)



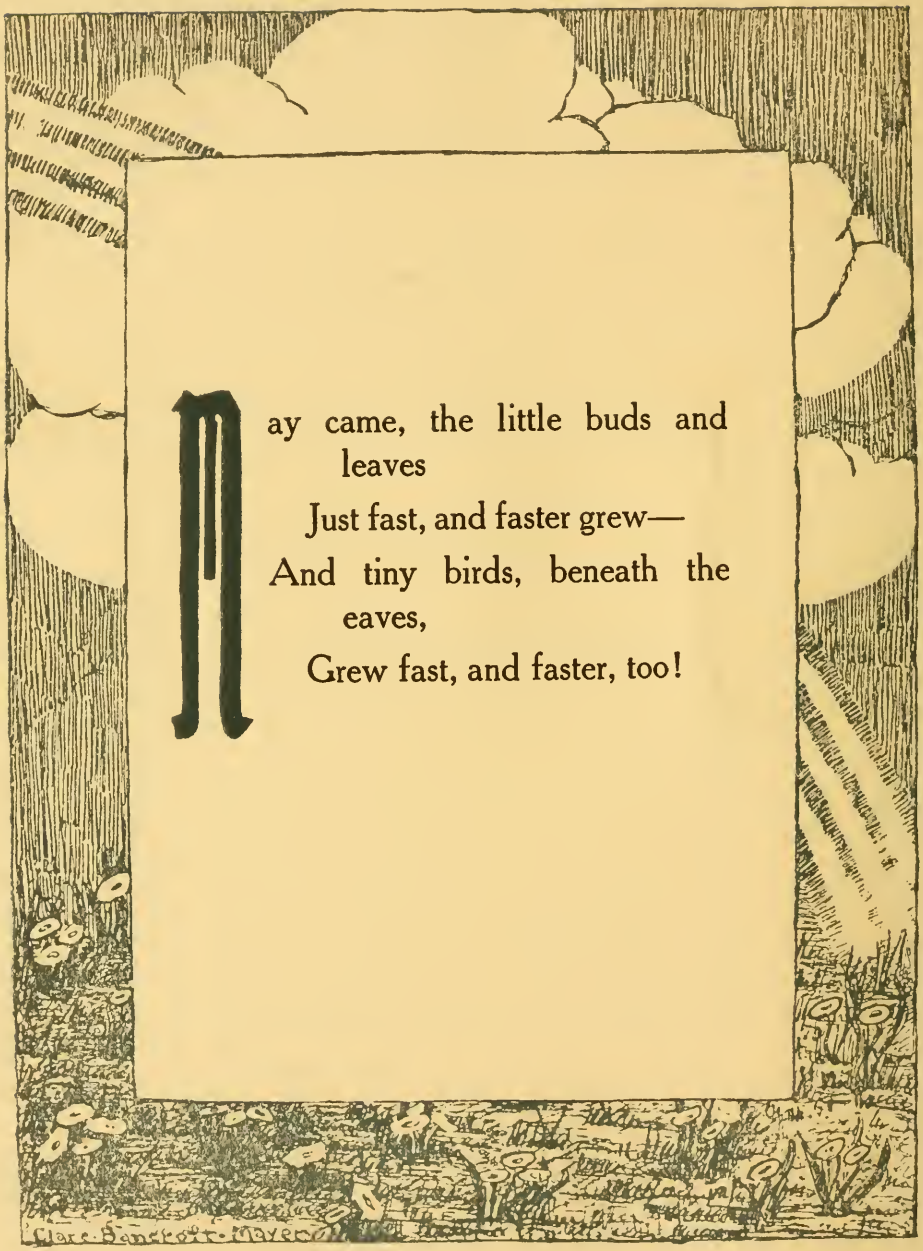
The March Wind called to April, when
To join him in the fun—
The Showers came, and it was then
That "Spring" was fair begun.



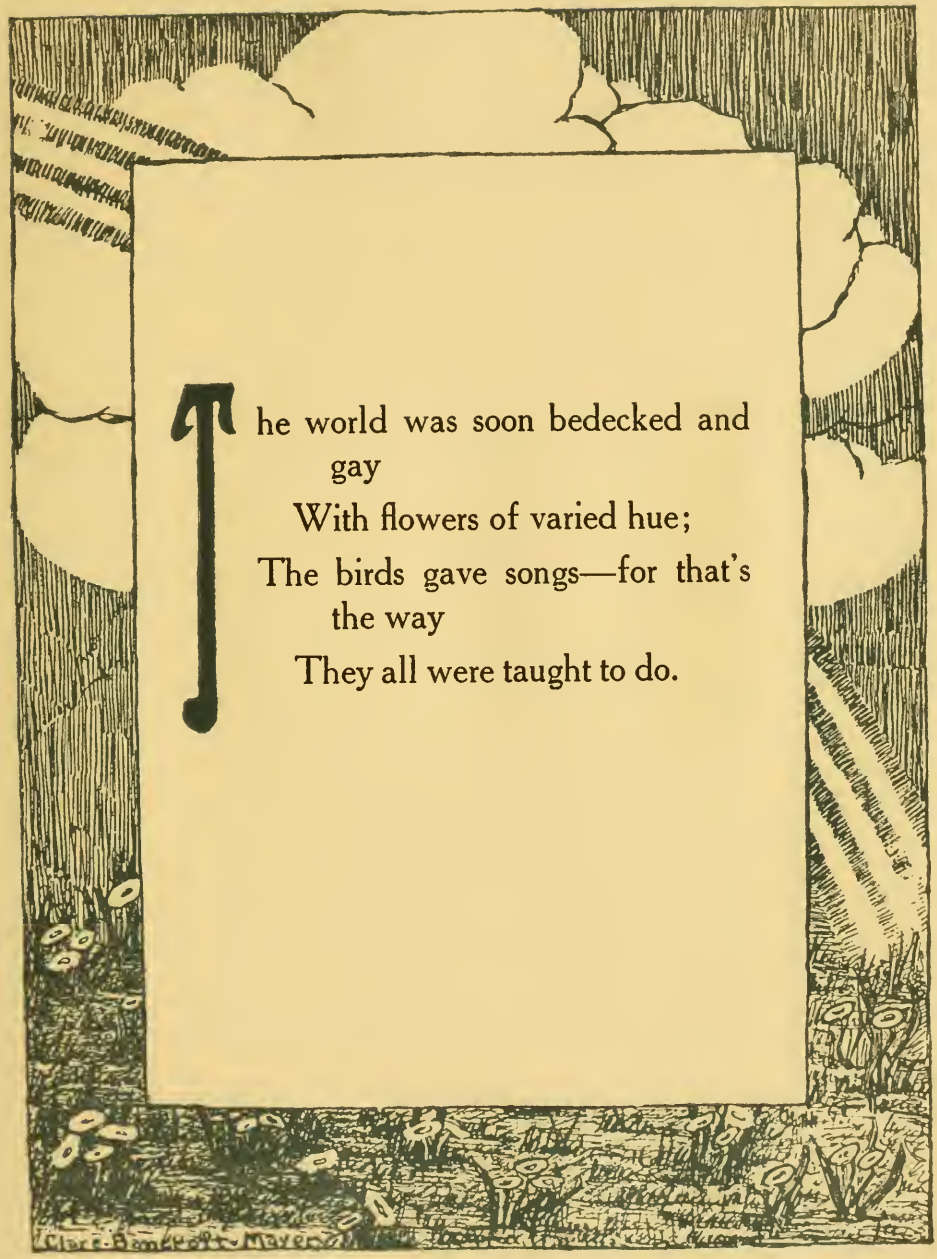
Now Mother Earth, "old as the hills,"
Sprang up in self-defense:
She knew too well the playful wills
Would soon their tricks commence.



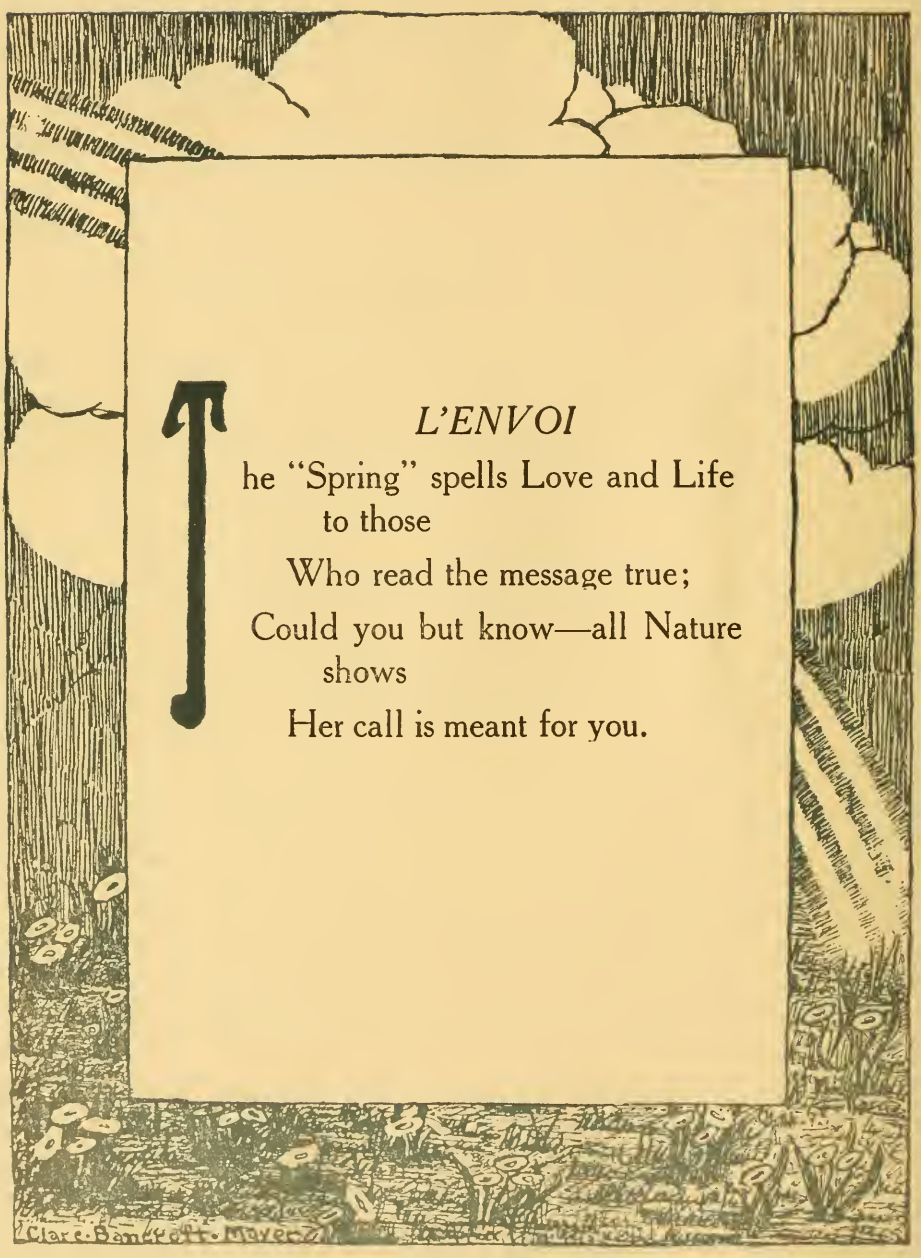
She punished March, and April, too—
And bade them gentle be;
Then called on May, as she was due
To flower forth, you see.



May came, the little buds and leaves
Just fast, and faster grew—
And tiny birds, beneath the eaves,
Grew fast, and faster, too!



The world was soon bedecked and gay
With flowers of varied hue;
The birds gave songs—for that's the way
They all were taught to do.



L'ENVOI

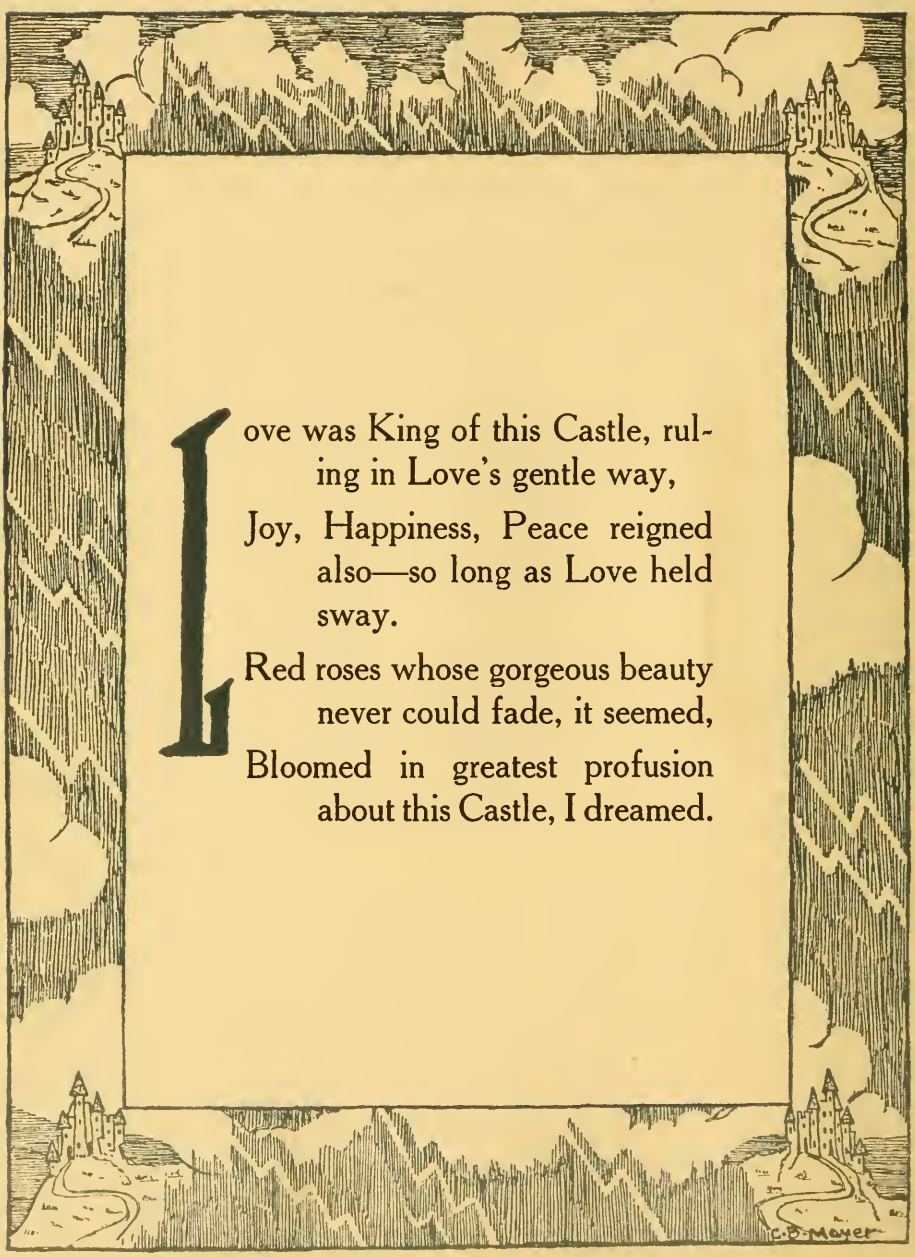
The "Spring" spells Love and Life to those
Who read the message true;
Could you but know—all Nature shows
Her call is meant for you.

Sitting alone one evening, no one my thoughts to share,

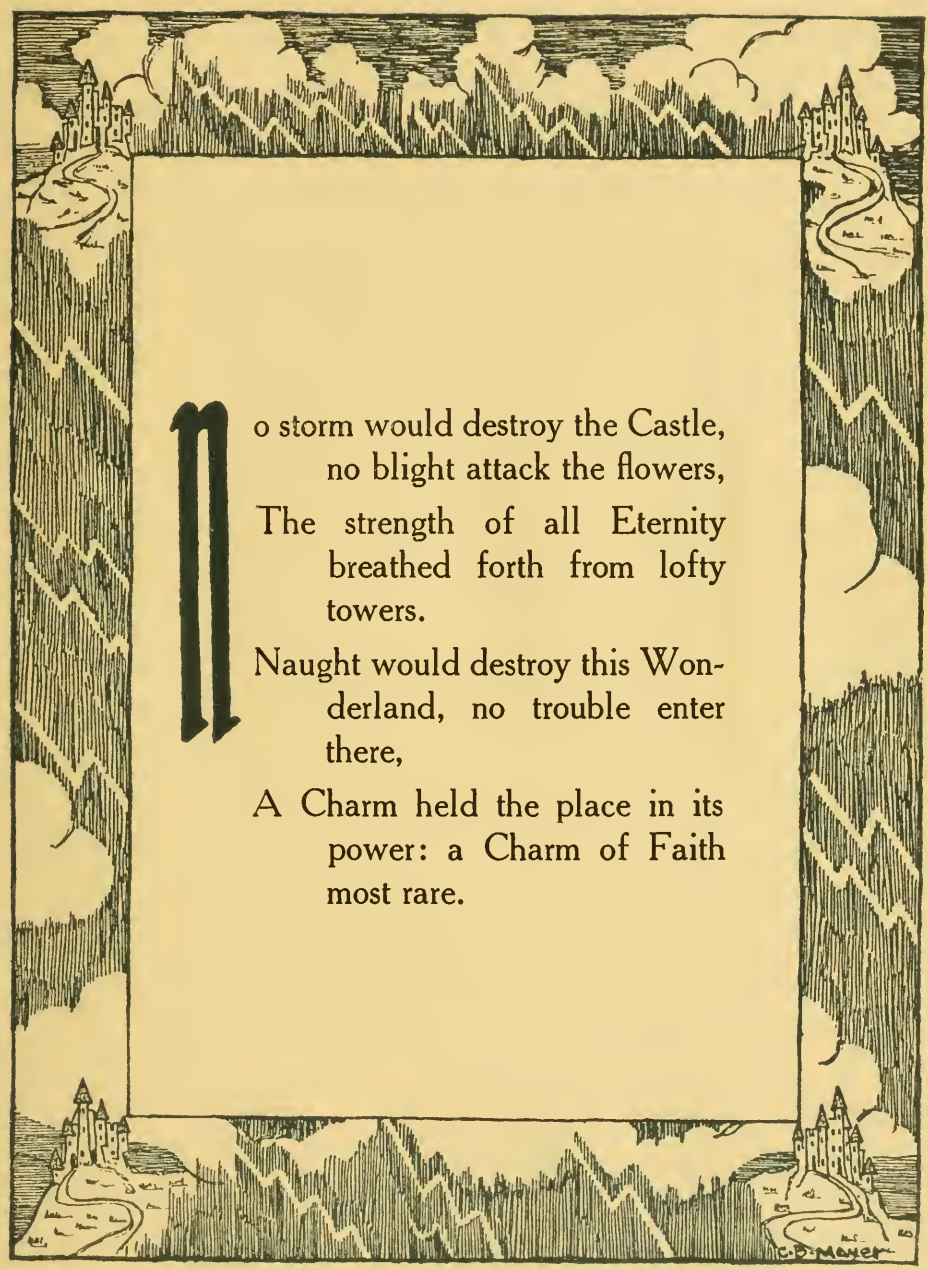
My dreams returned to childhood, to a Castle in the Air:

A Castle with firm foundation, grandest pillars above,

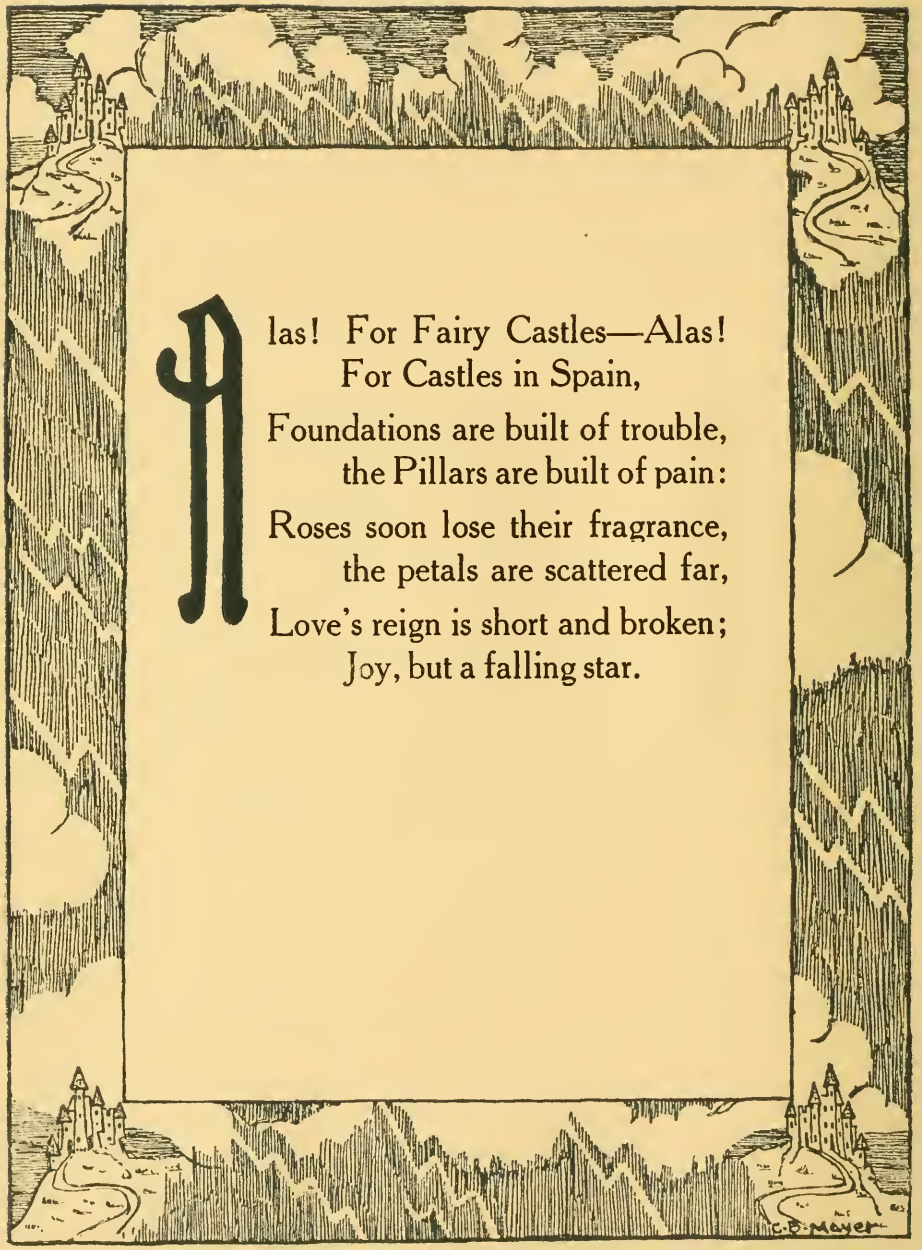
Gardens of beauty enclosing it, my Kingdom of Love.



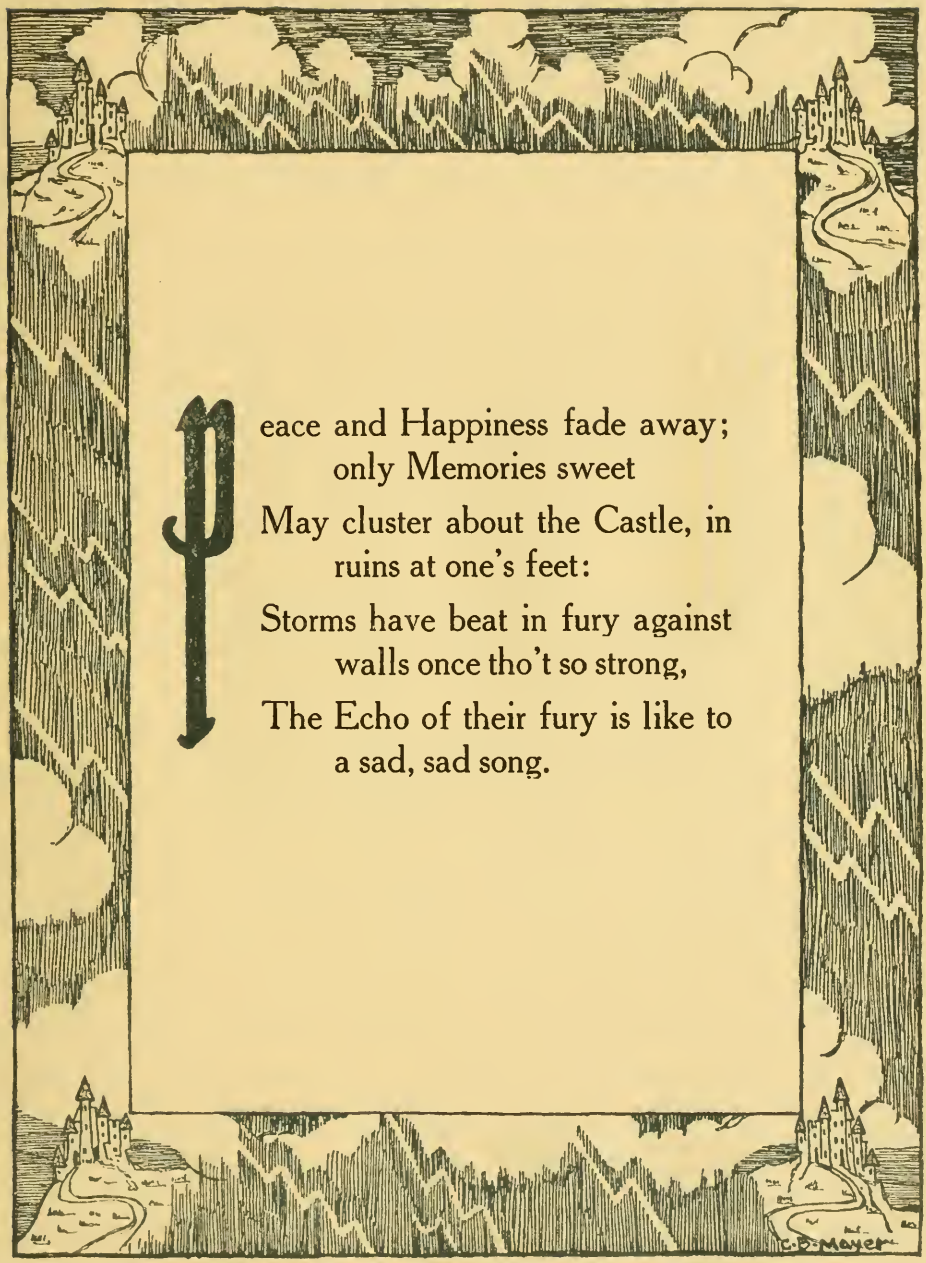
Love was King of this Castle, ruling in Love's gentle way,
Joy, Happiness, Peace reigned also—so long as Love held sway.
Red roses whose gorgeous beauty never could fade, it seemed,
Bloomed in greatest profusion about this Castle, I dreamed.



No storm would destroy the Castle,
no blight attack the flowers,
The strength of all Eternity
breathed forth from lofty
towers.
Naught would destroy this Won-
derland, no trouble enter
there,
A Charm held the place in its
power: a Charm of Faith
most rare.

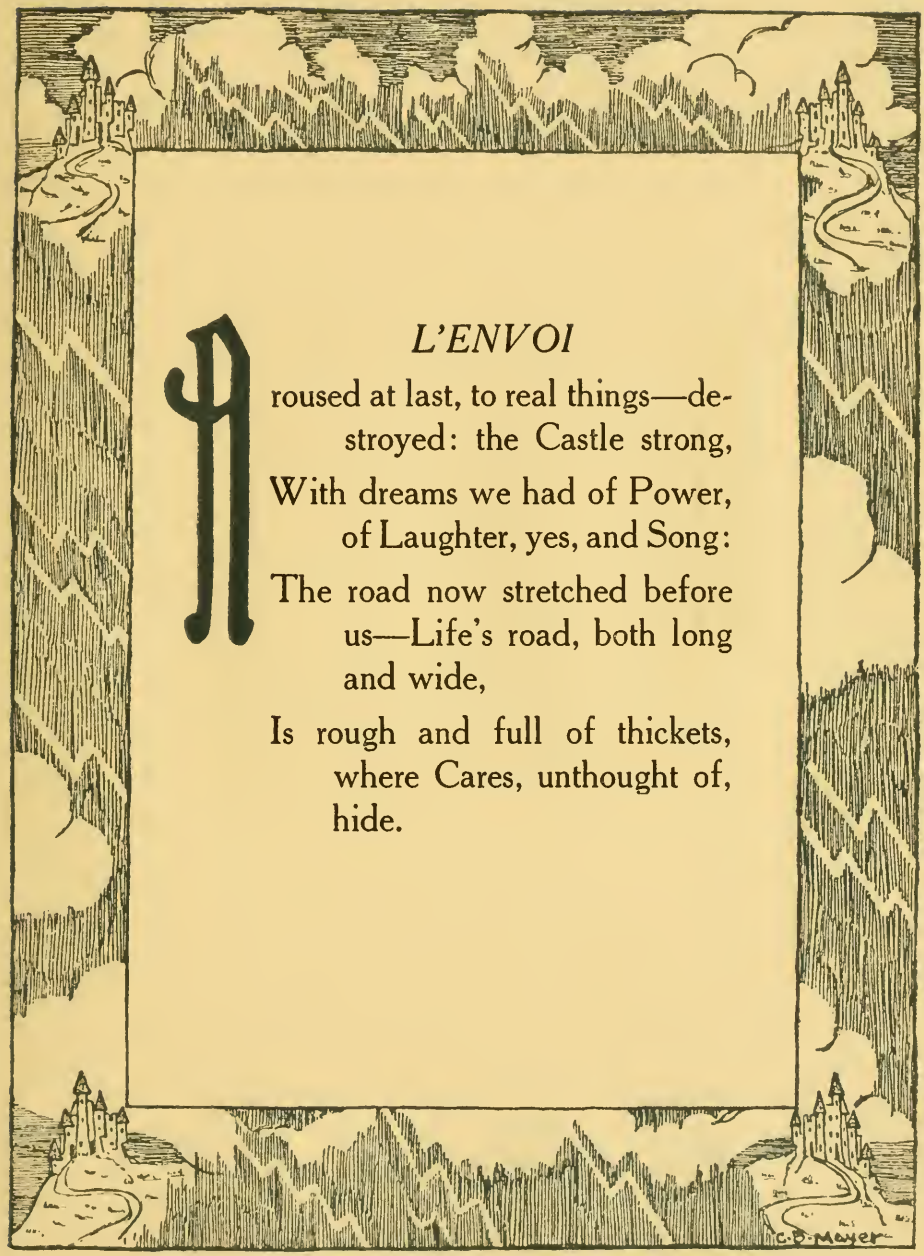


Alas! For Fairy Castles—Alas!
For Castles in Spain,
Foundations are built of trouble,
the Pillars are built of pain:
Roses soon lose their fragrance,
the petals are scattered far,
Love's reign is short and broken;
Joy, but a falling star.



Peace and Happiness fade away;
only Memories sweet
May cluster about the Castle, in
ruins at one's feet:
Storms have beat in fury against
walls once tho't so strong,
The Echo of their fury is like to
a sad, sad song.

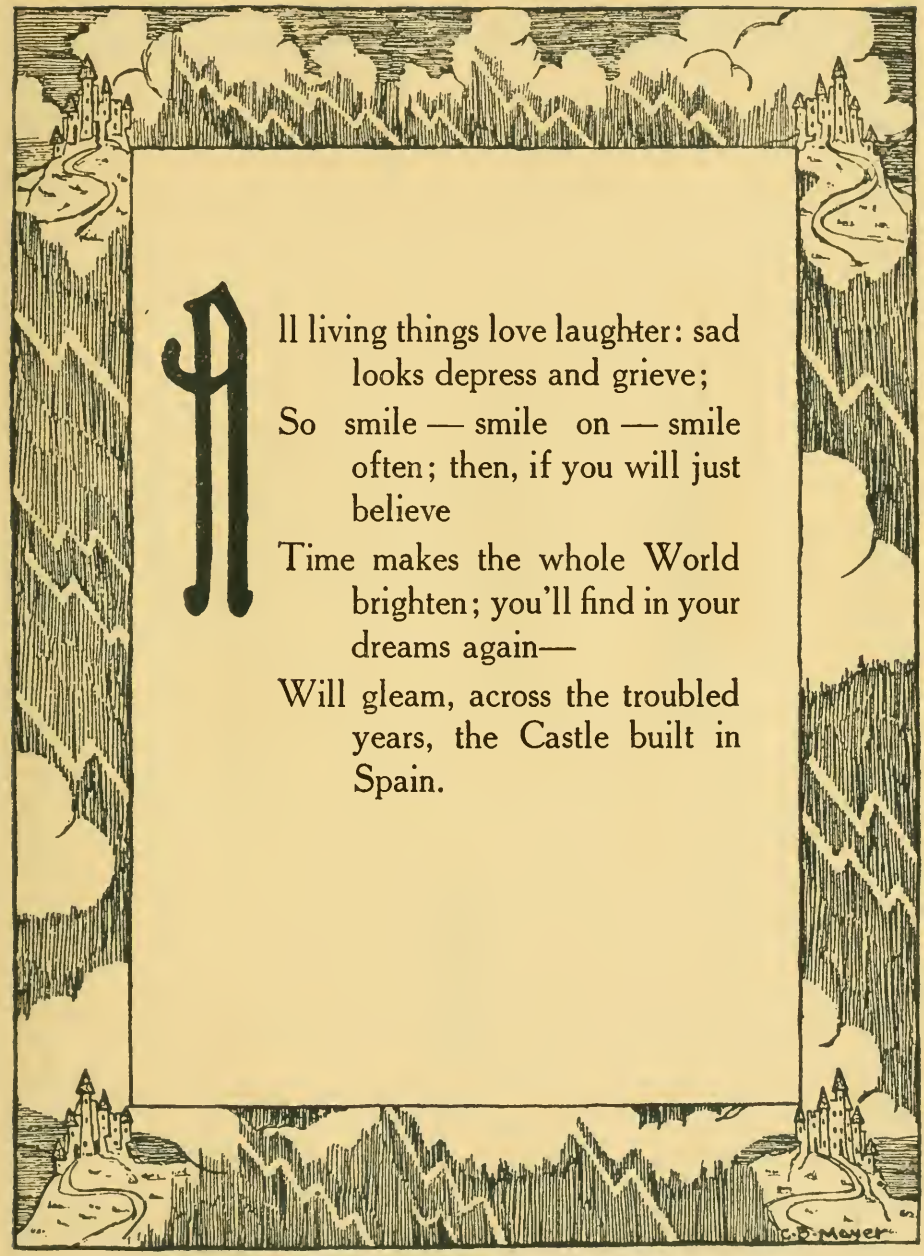
Rare Faith lies bruised and bleeding—time soon the charm dispels,
All Life is bleak and lonely, where no longer Fancy dwells.
Dark shadows take the place of Light, and bitter Sorrow's tears
Blind the sight of struggling Hope: endless seem the years.



L'ENVOI

A roused at last, to real things—destroyed: the Castle strong,
With dreams we had of Power, of Laughter, yes, and Song:
The road now stretched before us—Life's road, both long and wide,
Is rough and full of thickets, where Cares, unthought of, hide.

We falter oft, as on we pass; it seems scarce worth the while:
Still Courage forces us along, and keeps alive a smile:
For the World heeds not one's Sorrow—bitter, alas, but true;
Just laugh and hide your trouble, and the ones you meet laugh, too.



All living things love laughter: sad
looks depress and grieve;
So smile — smile on — smile
often; then, if you will just
believe
Time makes the whole World
brighten; you'll find in your
dreams again—
Will gleam, across the troubled
years, the Castle built in
Spain.

I wonder why on earth it is
That all things pick on me;
From tiny little red bugs, to
My Irish terrier's flea.

If I go out to drive, you know,
Just slowly passing by,
The bees and yellow-jackets, they
All hum aloud, "I spy!"

When in return I answer them
(As without doubt I do,)
It's in a manner much alarmed,
You'd answer that way, too!

Then comes the night, when breezes soft,
Are lulling Earth to rest,
And all these stinging, horrid things
Have lost their "stinging" zest.

I feel at last that peace is mine,
And gently breathe a sigh;
A pesky gnat will come along,
And, "biff," straight in my eye!

On nights I love to seek the porch,
There back and forth to swing;
Mosquitoes come in choruses
And to me they will sing.

I love the country's lanes and fields,
I love the rooster's crow;
The song of birds, the low of kine,
The lazy life, and slow.

It was country life to me exposed,
Queer "bugs," with queerer tricks;
And I know now, Oh me, Oh my,
Not only "clocks" have "ticks!"

In truth, I know some other "bugs"
Which worry one to death:
To try to tell how they attack,
Would just be waste of breath.

But I could tell a lot of things
I don't; it's not worth while;
I will say this—a wise old Duke
Was England's lord, Argyle.

His name was blest by great and
small,
His wisdom they did boast
When, worried by these "little"
things,
They saw a scratching post.

Perhaps great men do not complain,
As most weak people do;
However that may be, they say
"Bugs" cost a Waterloo.

Of course I'm not complaining,
now—
But maybe I'd best pause,
Before I tell how many times
I have indeed had cause!

When you're alone with your thoughts, in a room,
With spirit sunk to the depths in gloom—
Ah me—
Now wouldn't it help, if a friendly pen,
In a loving hand, would happen then
To drop you a line—a word of cheer,
And the postman's whistle, drawing near,
Ah me—

Would call to you, with a sound so shrill
That your heart would bound and your senses thrill
At the tho't of a word, from a friendly pen,
Which was held by a loving hand, and then—
Ah me—
Your spirit would rise, and dispel the gloom
From out of your heart, and out of the room—
Ah me—
Now wouldn't it help?

Speed away, speed away in the automobile,
One and all now look out, for I am at the wheel;
It makes little difference that you instructions gave,
It's quite out of the question for my feet to behave.

To the right of the road, be that road
short or long—
When I think I am right, I am sure
to be wrong—
Wobble this way and that—now
hold on to your hat—
Oh pshaw! There's another old
rear one gone flat.

Well, we'll start up again and we'll
try to go slow,
Just two hands and two feet, still
it worries me so
To know which to use; it sure
makes your head reel
When you are out on the road
and I'm at the wheel.

My old friends are slighted, my
new ones are unseen,
I stare straight ahead as I guide
the machine;
Horses and dogs, aye, even the
beasts of the field,
Loom like dragons of old, when
they're viewed thro' the
shield.

Each nerve at a tension, just ready
to snap,
Honk! Honk! Oh, it is dreadful
when dogs come and yap
Right in front of the car; but with
force, a quick move
And I've just kept from crushing
a creature I love.

Truth is, I'm a coward, I pretend to
be "game"
And deep in your heart, you are
sorry you came;
Some thrills will you have, but
small pleasure you'll feel,
If you ride out with me when I take
the wheel.

Oh soldier boy, in khaki clad,
Be staunch, be brave, be true:
For where Old Glory waves, my lad,
Our hearts are there with you.

Clara Bancroft Moyer

Tho', soldier boy, the way be long,
March on, and struggle through:
Prove steadfast, and remember this,
Our faith is placed in you.

In trench or camp, on land or sea,
Amidst the battle's din,
Our standard bears the Star of Hope,
Our soldier boys will win.

Clara Bancroft Cover

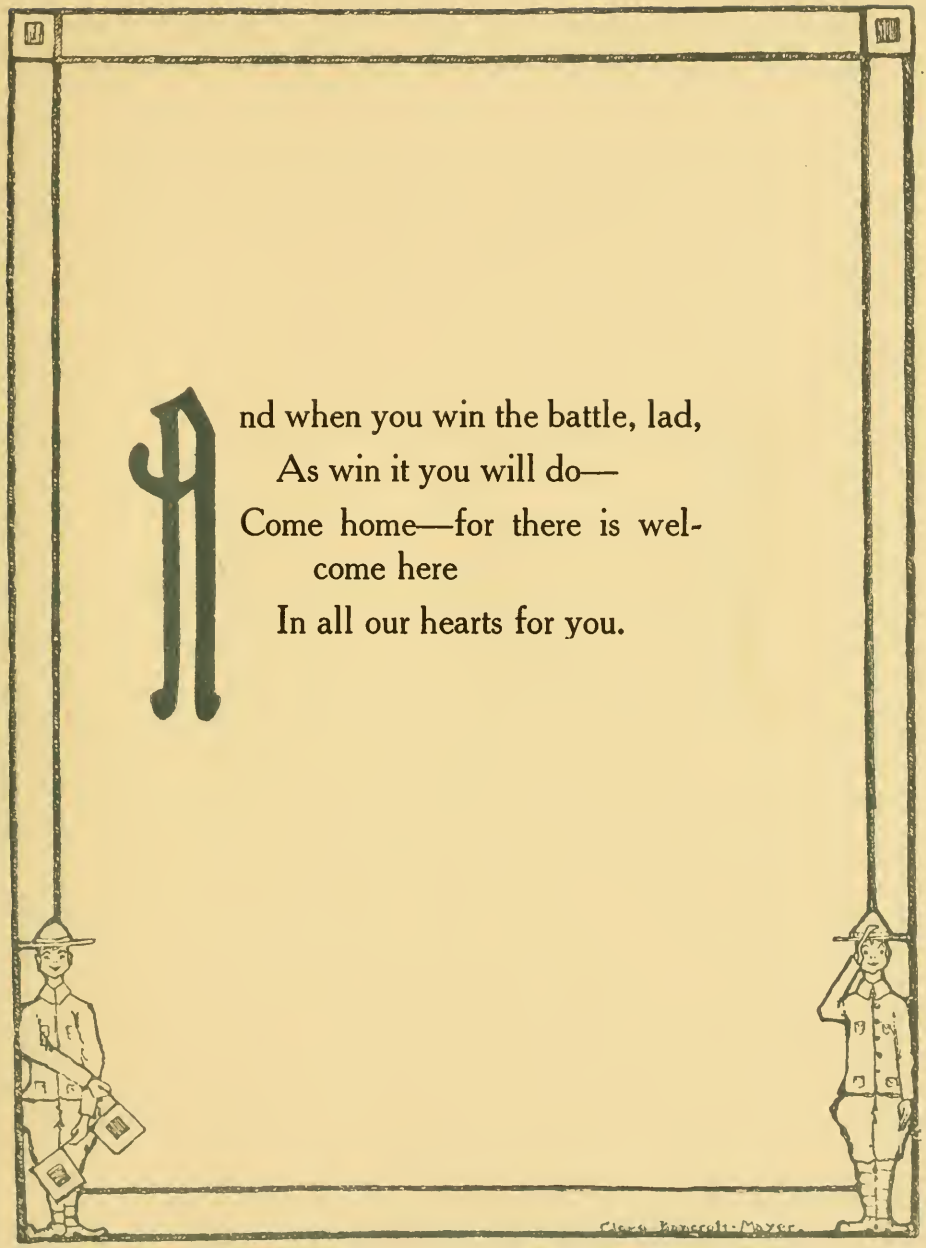
Be yours the task to fight abroad
Alone, and friendless, too.
Uncheered for deeds of valor done,
Our thoughts are there, with you.

Should fate decree an unmarked
grave
On foreign shores, for you,
Fear not—long shall Old Glory
wave
Our gratitude to you.

Should honors great, O soldier boy,
Be yours, and rightly, too,
Bear them with dignity, and know
Our hearts beat fast for you.

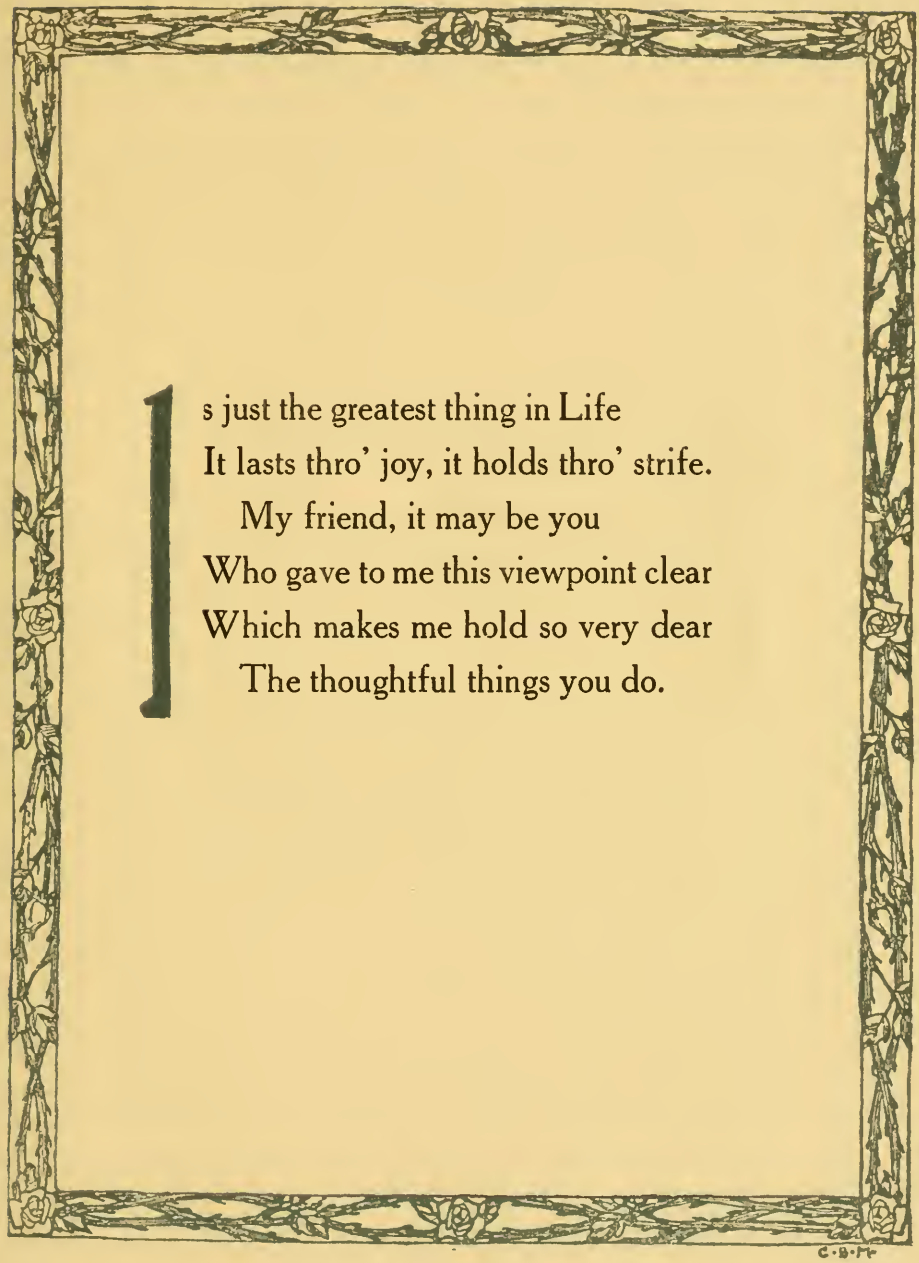
Clara Bancroft Myer.

And when you win the battle, lad,
As win it you will do—
Come home—for there is welcome here
In all our hearts for you.



"And what is friendship but a
name?"
'Twas uttered by a man of fame
(But I don't think it true.)
Friendship to me, when once 'tis
formed
Between two souls—and nursed
and warmed
By understanding, too.

C·B·M·



Is just the greatest thing in Life
It lasts thro' joy, it holds thro' strife.
My friend, it may be you
Who gave to me this viewpoint clear
Which makes me hold so very dear
The thoughtful things you do.

And I'll hold fast to Friendship's
chain,
In brightest sunshine, or in rain,
I'll be a friend to you.

Love? Spells wisdom, also Folly;
means Happiness, means
Woe;

Sometimes Shadow, sometimes
Sunshine, does any mortal
know?

Perchance means Peace; per-
chance means Strife—

Perchance means Death — but,
Love is Life!

C·B·M·

Love? A species of fever, attacking the children of men,

Attacking without rhyme or reason; one never knows how, why or when.

The germ has existed for ages; affects mortals, kings, queens and pages—

Nobody can tell—but I'd just as well, be dead, as to live without Love.

C·B·M·

Four little letters, written in a row—
L-O-V-E placed precisely so.
Sung low, with accent sweet, sung
with harsher sound
Love is the axle which makes the
world go round.

Cheer—I send it you.
Health—I wish for you.
Remembrance—I keep for you.
Ideals—I hold for you.
Search these words of mine.
Thou—and thoughts of thine
Mingle softly and entwine
A wreath of "Merry Christmas" time
Secured by Friendship's fingers.

C·B·M·

If all the stockings in the land, were hung
upon a line,
They would not hold the Christmas wish,
within this heart of mine.
Joy, Peace and Love, with Friendship true,
would fill them all, you know
'Till Love would burst from out the top,
while Joy would burst the toe.
There's nothing in this world so bright I do
not wish for thee,
And a "Merry, Merry Christmas," means
just everything—from me.

Christmas time with mistletoe,
And tiny sprigs of holly;
Christmas trees with gleaming lights,
And every one so jolly.
I wish that every joy on Earth
Be yours throughout the year—
In truth, thro' all the years to come,
This do I wish you, dear.
I also wish, in your happiness,
Wherever you may be,
In a little corner of your heart
You'd keep a thought of me.

C·B·M·

X 107

C—heerful smiles today, folks,
H—elp the World to smile;
R—eally try your best, folks,
I—n truth, 'tis well worth while.
S—mile from early morning, folks,
T—ill late into the night—
M—erry Christmas means, dear folks,
A—joyous heart, and light—
S—ure—upon this Day, folks—smile right!

C·B·M

I hope the New Year to you brings
The content one feels when the kettle sings,
And the kitten purrs by the fireside—
While the wild wind blows and the Yule log glows,
And the Brownies in the chimney corner hide.

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